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ALCIPHRON:
OR, THE
MINUTE PHILOSOPHER.
IN
SEVEN DIALOGUES.

Containing an APOLOGY for the Christian Religion,
against those who are called Free-thinkers.

VOLUME the FIRST.

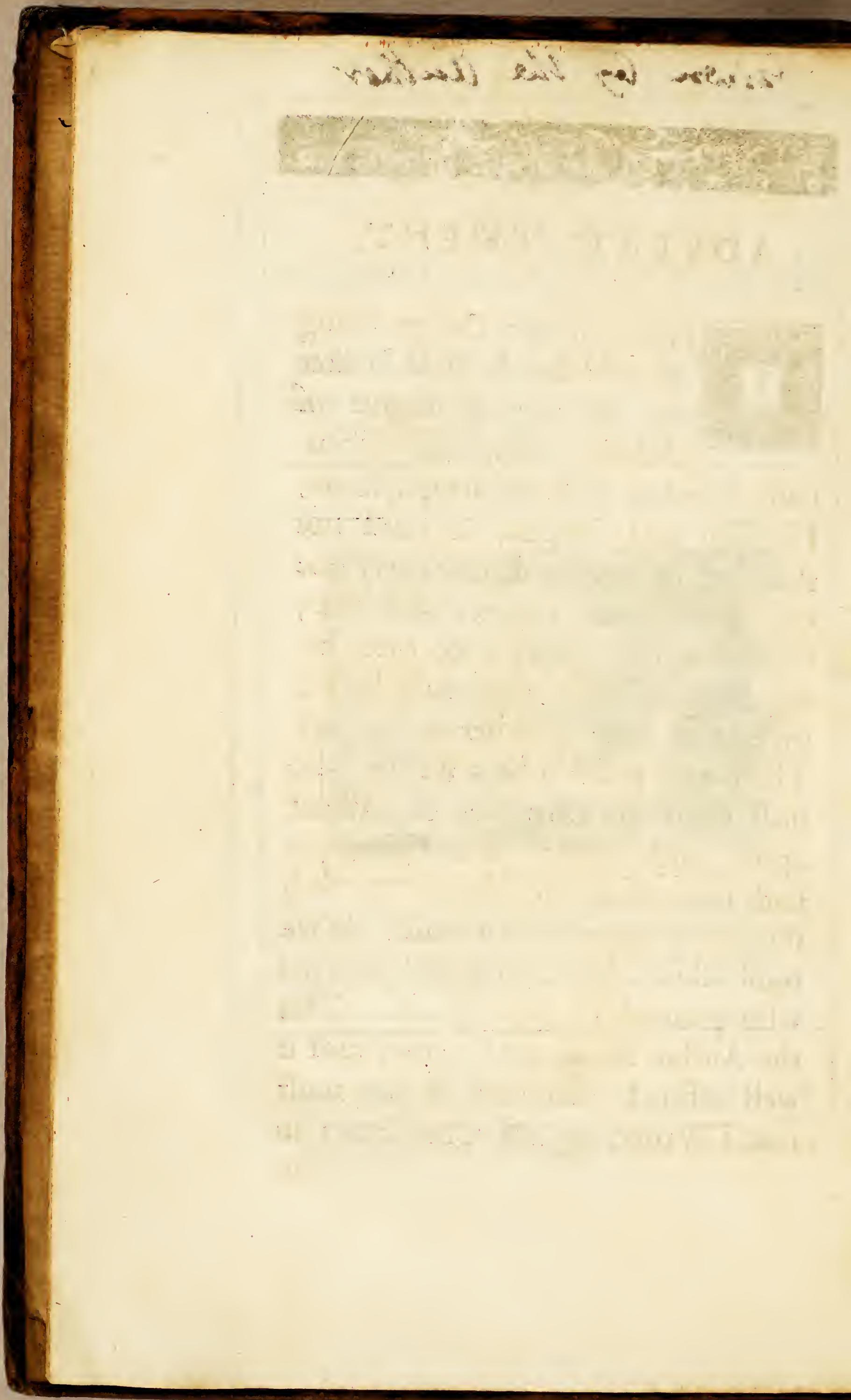


They have forsaken me the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them
out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. Jerem. ii. 13.
Sic mortuus, ut quidam ministri Philosophi censem, nihil sentiam,
non vereor ne hunc errorem meum mortui Philosophi irrideant.

Cicero.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. Tonson in the Strand, 1732.





A D V E R T I S E M E N T.



HE Author's Design being to consider the Free-thinker in the various Lights of Atheist, Libertine, Enthusiast, Scowler, Critic, Metaphysician, Fatalist, and Sceptic, it must not therefore be imagined, that every one of these Characters agrees with every individual Free-thinker, no more being implied, than that each Part agrees with some or other of the Sect. There may possibly be a Reader who shall think the Character of Atheist agrees with none: But though it hath been often said, there is no such thing as a Speculative Atheist; yet we must allow, there are several Atheists who pretend to Speculation. This the Author knows to be true; and is well assured, that one of the most noted Writers against Christianity in our

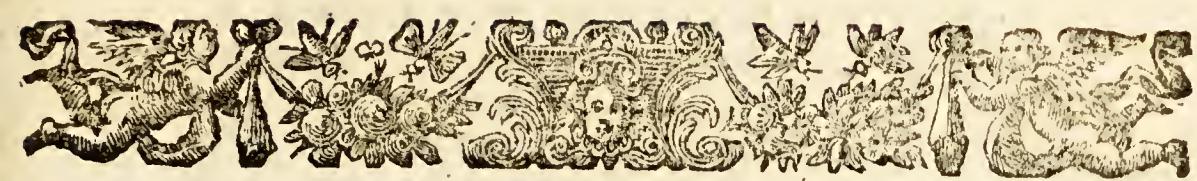
ADVERTISMENT.

our Times, declared, he had found out a Demonstration against the Being of a God. And he doubts not, whoever will be at the pains to inform himself, by a general Conversation, as well as Books, of the Principles and Tenets of our modern Free-thinkers, will see too much Cause to be persuaded that nothing in the ensuing Characters is beyond the Life. As for the Treatise concerning VISION, why the Author annexed it to the MINUTE PHILOSOPHER, will appear upon Perusal of the Fourth Dialogue.

E R R A T A.

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6. *The Progress of a Free-thinker towards Atheism.*
7. *Joint Imposture of the Priest and Magistrate.*
8. *The Free-thinker's Method in making Converts and Discoveries.*
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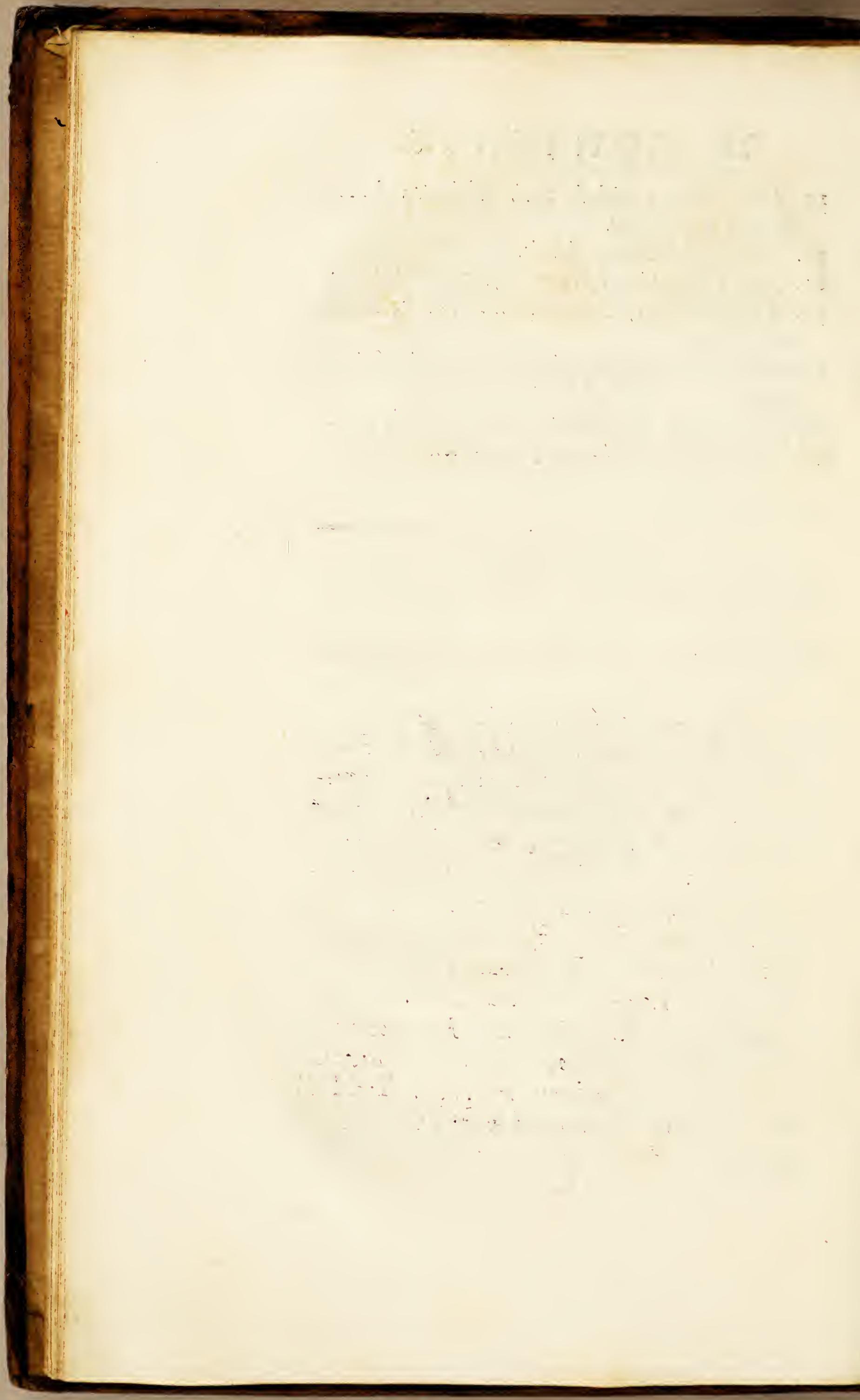
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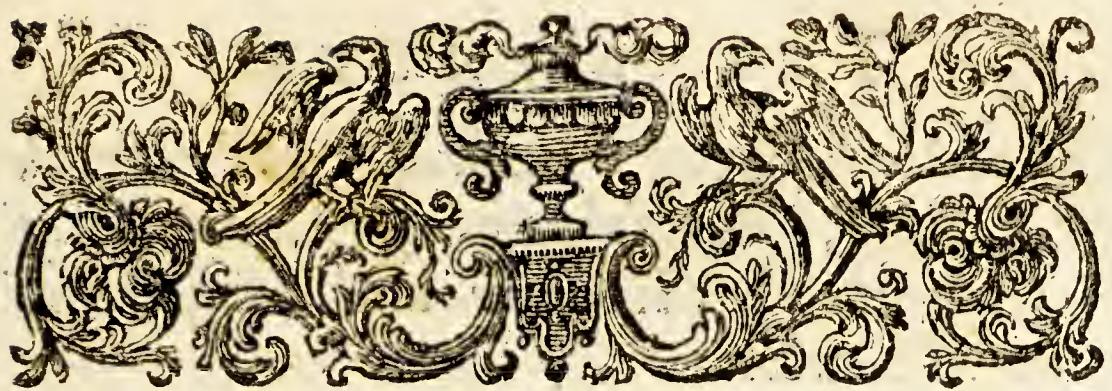
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THE
MINUTE PHILOSOPHER.

The FIRST DIALOGUE.

- I. *Introduction.* II. *Aim and Endeavours of Free-thinkers.* III. *Opposed by the Clergy.* IV. *Liberty of Freethinking.* V. *Farther Account of the Views of Free-thinkers.* VI. *The Progress of a Free-thinker towards Atheism.* VII. *Joint Imposture of the Priest and Magistrate.* VIII. *The Free-thinker's Method in making Converts and Discoveries.* IX. *The Atheist alone Free. His Sense of natural Good and Evil.* X. *Modern Free-thinkers more properly named Minute Philosophers.* XI. *Minute Philosophers, what sort of Men, and how educated.* XII. *Their Numbers, Progress, and Tenets.* XIII. *Compared with other Philosophers.* XIV. *What Things and Nations*

DIAL.

I.



tions to be esteemed natural. XV. Truth
the same, notwithstanding Diversity of
Opinions. XVI. Rule and Measure of
moral Truths.

I.



Flattered my self, *Theages*, that
before this time I might have
been able to have sent you
an agreeable Account of the
Success of the Affair, which
brought me into this remote corner of the
Country. But instead of this, I shou'd
now give you the Detail of its Miscarriage,
if I did not rather choose to entertain
you with some amusing Incidents, which
have helped to make me easy under a Cir-
cumstance I cou'd neither obviate nor fore-
see. Events are not in our power; but it
always is, to make a good use even of the
very worst. And I must needs own, the
Course and Event of this Affair gave
opportunity for Reflections, that make
me some amends for a great loss of
Time, Pains, and Expence. A Life of
Action, which takes its Issue from the
Counsels, Passions, and Views of other
Men, if it doth not draw a Man to imi-
tate, will at least teach him to observe.
And a Mind at liberty to reflect on its
own Observations, if it produce nothing
useful to the World, seldom fails of En-
tertainment

ertainment to it self. For several Months DIAL.
past I have enjoy'd such Liberty and Lei- I.
sure in this distant Retreat, far beyond the
Verge of that great Whirlpool of Business,
Faction, and Pleasure, which is called
the World. And a Retreat in it self a-
greeable, after a long Scene of Trouble
and Disquiet, was made much more so by
the Conversation and good Qualities of
my Host *Euphranor*, who unites in his
own Person the Philosopher and the Far-
mer, two Characters not so inconsistent in
Nature as by Custom they seem to be.
Euphranor, from the time he left the Uni-
versity, hath lived in this small Town,
where he is possessed of a convenient
House with a hundred Acres of Land ad-
joining to it; which being improved by
his own Labour, yield him a plentiful
Subsistence. He hath a good Collection,
chiefly of old Books, left him by a Cler-
gyman his Uncle, under whose Care he
was brought up. And the Busines of his
Farm doth not hinder him from making
good use of it. He hath read much, and
thought more; his Health and Strength of
Body enabling him the better to bear Fa-
tigue of Mind. He is of opinion that he
cou'd not carry on his Studies with more
Advantage in the Closet than the Field,
where his Mind is seldom idle while he

DIAL. prunes the Trees, follows the Plough, or
I. looks after his Flocks. In the House of
— this honest Friend I became acquainted
with *Crito*, a neighbouring Gentleman of
distinguished Merit and Estate, who lives
in great Friendship with *Euphranor*. Last
Summer, *Crito*, whose Parish-Church is
in our Town, dining on a Sunday at *Euphranor's*, I happened to inquire after his
Guests, whom we had seen at Church with
him the Sunday before. They are both
well, said *Crito*, but, having once occa-
sionally conformed, to see what sort of
Assembly our Parish cou'd afford, they had
no farther Curiosity to gratify at Church,
and so chose to stay at home. How, said
Euphranor, are they then Dissenters? No,
replied *Crito*, they are Free-thinkers. *Euphranor*, who had never met with any of
this Species or Sect of Men, and but lit-
tle of their Writings, shew'd a great De-
sire to know their Principles or System.
That is more, said *Crito*, than I will un-
dertake to tell you. Their Writers are of
different Opinions. Some go farther, and
explain themselves more freely than others.
But the current general Notions of the
Sect are best learned from Conversation
with those who profess themselves of it.
Your Curiosity may now be satisfy'd, if
you and *Dion* wou'd spend a Week at my

House with these Gentlemen, who seem DIALY very ready to declare and propagate their I.

Opinions. *Alciphron* is above Forty, and no stranger either to Men or Books. I knew him first at the Temple, which, upon an Estate's falling to him, he quitted, to travel through the polite parts of Europe. Since his Return he hath lived in the Amusements of the Town, which being grown stale and tasteless to his Palate, have flung him into a sort of splenetic Indolence. The young Gentleman, *Lycicles*, is a near Kinsman of mine, one of lively Parts, and a general Insight into Letters, who, after having passed the Forms of Education, and seen a little of the World, fell into an Intimacy with Men of Pleasure, and Free-thinkers, I am afraid much to the damage of his Constitution and his Fortune. But what I most regret, is the Corruption of his Mind by a Set of pernicious Principles, which, having been observed to survive the Passions of Youth, forestal even the remote Hopes of Amendment. They are both Men of Fashion, and wou'd be agreeable enough, if they did not fancy themselves Free-thinkers. But this, to speak the Truth, has given them a certain Air and Manner, which a little too visibly declare they think themselves wiser than the rest of the World.

DIAL. I shou'd therefore be not at all displeased
I. if my Guests met with their Match,
where they least expected it, in a Country
Farmer. I shall not, replied *Euphranor*,
pretend to any more than barely to inform
my self of their Principles and Opinions.
For this end I propose to-morrow to set a
Week's Task to my Labourers, and ac-
cept your Invitation, if *Dion* thinks good.
To which I gave consent. Mean while,
said *Crito*, I shall prepare my Guests, and
let them know that an honest Neighbour
hath a mind to discourse them on the Sub-
ject of their Free-thinking. And, if I am
not much mistaken, they will please them-
selves with the Prospect of leaving a Con-
vert behind them, even in a Country Vil-
lage. Next Morning *Euphranor* rose ear-
ly, and spent the Forenoon in ordering his
Affairs. After Dinner we took our Walk
to *Crito*'s, which lay through half a do-
zen pleasant Fields planted round with
Plane-trees, that are very common in this
part of the Country. We walked under
the delicious Shade of these Trees for a-
bout an Hour before we came to *Crito*'s
House, which stands in the middle of a
small Park, beautify'd with two fine
Groves of Oak and Walnut, and a wind-
ing Stream of sweet and clear Water. We
met a Servant at the Door with a small
Basket

Basket of Fruit which he was carrying DIAL^o into a Grove, where he said his Master I. was with the two Strangers. We found them all three sitting under a Shade. And after the usual Forms at first meeting, *Euphranor* and I sat down by them. Our Conversation began upon the Beauty of this rural Scene, the fine Season of the Year, and some late Improvements which had been made in the adjacent Country by new Methods of Agriculture. Whence *Alciphron* took occasion to observe, That the most valuable Improvements came latest. I should have small Temptation, said he, to live where Men have neither polished Manners, nor improved Minds, though the Face of the Country were ever so well improved. But I have long observed, that there is a gradual Progress in humane Affairs. The first Care of Mankind is to supply the Cravings of Nature; in the next place they study the Conveniences and Comforts of Life. But the subduing Prejudices, and acquiring true Knowledge, that *Herculean* Labour is the last, being what demands the most perfect Abilities, and to which all other Advantages are preparative. Right, said *Euphranor*, *Alciphron* hath touched our true Defect. It was always my Opinion, That as soon as we had provided Subsistence for the Bo-

DIAL. dy, our next Care should be to improve
I. the Mind. But the Desire of Wealth steps
between and engrosseth Mens Thoughts.

II. *ALC.* Thought is that which we
are told distinguisheth Man from Beast;
and Freedom of Thought makes as great
a difference between Man and Man. It is
to the noble Asserters of this Privilege and
Perfection of Humane kind, the Free-
thinkers I mean, who have sprung up and
multiplied of late Years, that we are in-
debted for all those important Discoveries,
that Ocean of Light which hath broke in
and made its way, in spight of Slavery
and Superstition. *Euphranor*, who is a
sincere Enemy to both, testified a great
Esteem for those Worthies who had pre-
served their Country from being ruined by
them, having spread so much Light and
Knowledge over the Land. He added,
That he liked the Name and Character of
a Free-thinker: but in his Sense of the
Word, every honest Inquirer after Truth
in any Age or Country was intitled to it.
He therefore desired to know what this
Sect was that *Alciphron* had spoken of as
newly sprung up; what were their Te-
nets; what were their Discoveries; and
wherein they employ'd themselves, for
the benefit of Mankind? Of all which, he
shou'd

shou'd think himself obliged, if *Alciphron* DIAL.
wou'd inform him. That I shall very EASY.
easily, replied *Alciphron*, for I profess my self one of the number, and my most intimate Friends are some of the most considerable among them. And perceiving that *Euphranor* heard him with respect, he proceeded very fluently. You must know, said he, that the mind of Man may be fitly compared to a piece of Land. What stubbing, plowing, digging and harrowing is to the one, that thinking, reflecting, examining is to the other. Each hath its proper culture; and as Land that is suffered to lie waste and wild for a long tract of time will be overspread with brush-wood, brambles, thorns and such vegetables which have neither use nor beauty; even so there will not fail to sprout up in a neglected uncultivated mind, a great number of prejudices and absurd opinions, which owe their origin partly to the Soil it self, the passions and imperfections of the mind of Man, and partly to those Seeds which chance to be scattered in it by every wind of Doctrine, which the cunning of Statesmen, the singularity of Pedants, the superstition of Fools or the imposture of Priests shall raise. Represent to your self the mind of Man or Humane Nature in general, that for

DIAL. for so many ages had lain obnoxious to
I. the frauds of designing and the follies of
weak Men. How it must be over-run
with prejudices and errors, what firm
and deep Roots they must have taken, and
consequently how difficult a task it must be
to extirpate them? And yet this work no
less difficult than glorious is the employ-
ment of the modern Free-thinkers. *Alci-
phron* having said this made a pause and
looked round on the Company. Truly,
said I, a very laudable undertaking! We
think said *Euphranor* that it is prais-
eworthy to clear and subdue the earth, to
tame brute Animals, to fashion the out-
sides of Men, provide sustenance for their
Bodies, and cure their Maladies. But what
is all this in comparison of that most
excellent and useful undertaking to free
Mankind from their errors, and to im-
prove and adorn their minds? For things
of less merit towards the world, Altars
have been raised and Temples built in
ancient times. Too many in our days,
replied *Alciphron*, are such Fools as not
to know their best Benefactors from their
worst Enemies. They have a blind re-
spect for those who enslave them, and
look upon their Deliverers as a dangerous
sort of Men that wou'd undermine re-
ceived Principles and Opinions. *EUPH.*

It

It were a great pity such worthy ingenious DIAL.
Men shou'd meet with any discouragement. I.
ment. For my part I shou'd think, a Man
who spent his time in such a painful im-
partial search after Truth a better friend to
Mankind than the greatest Statesman or
Hero, the advantage of whose Labours
is confined to a little part of the world,
and a short space of time, whereas a Ray
of Truth may enlighten the whole world
and extend to future ages. ALC. It will
be some time I fear before the common
herd think as you do. But the better
sort, the Men of parts and polite Educa-
tion pay a due regard to the Patrons of
Light and Truth.

III. EUPH. The Clergy no doubt are on
all occasions ready to forward and applaud
your worthy endeavours. Upon hearing
this *Lysicles* cou'd hardly refrain from
laughing. And *Alciphron* with an air of
pity told *Euphranor* that he perceived he
was unacquainted with the real character
of those Men. For, faith he, you must
know that of all Men living they are our
greatest Enemies. If it were possible
they wou'd extinguish the very light of
nature, turn the world into a dungeon,
and keep mankind for ever in Chains and
darkness. EUPH. I never imagined any
thing

DIAL. thing like this of our Protestant Clergy,
I. particularly those of the established
Church, whom, if I may be allowed to
judge by what I have seen of them and
their writings, I shou'd have thought lo-
vers of learning and useful knowledge.
ALC. Take my word for it, Priests of all
Religions are the same, wherever there are
Priests there will be Priestcraft, and
wherever there is Priestcraft there will be
a persecuting Spirit, which they never fail
to exert to the utmost of their power a-
gainst all those who have the courage to
think for themselves, and will not submit
to be hoodwinked and manacled by their
Reverend leaders. Those great Masters of
Pedantry and Jargon have coined several
Systems, which are all equally true and of
equal importance to the world. The con-
tending Sects are each alike fond of their
own, and alike prone to discharge their fury
upon all who dissent from them. Cruelty
and Ambition being the darling vices of
Priests and Churchmen all the world over,
they endeavour in all Countries to get an
ascendant over the rest of mankind, and
the Magistrate having a joint interest with
the Priest in subduing, amusing, and scaring
the People, too often lends a hand to the
Hierarchy, who never think their autho-
rity and possessions secure, so long as those
who

who differ from them in opinion are al- DIAL.
lowed to partake even in the common I.
rights belonging to their birth or species. —
To represent the matter in a true light,
figure to your selves a monster or spectre
made up of Superstition and Enthusiasm,
the joint issue of Statecraft and Priestcraft,
rattling chains in one hand and with the
other brandishing a flaming Sword over
the Land, and menacing destruction to all
who shall dare to follow the dictates of
Reason and Common Sense. Do but con-
sider this, and then say if there was not
danger as well as difficulty in our under-
taking. Yet, such is the generous
ardour that Truth inspires, our Free-
thinkers are neither overcome by the one
nor daunted by the other. In spight of
both we have already made so many Pro-
selytes among the better sort, and their
numbers increase so fast, that we hope we
shall be able to carry all before us, beat
down the Bulwarks of all Tyranny Secu-
lar or Ecclesiastical, break the Fetters and
Chains of our Countrymen, and restore
the original inherent Rights, Liberties,
and Prerogatives of Mankind. *Euphranor*
heard this discourse with his mouth open
and his eyes fixed upon *Alciphron*, who,
having uttered it with no small emotion,
stopt to draw breath and recover himself;

But

DIAL. But finding that no body made answer he
I. resumed the thread of his discourse, and
turning to *Euphranor* spoke in a lower note
what follows. The more innocent and ho-
nest a Man is, the more liable is he to be
imposed on by the specious pretences of
other Men. You have probably met with
certain writings of our Divines that treat of
grace, virtue, goodness and such matters fit
to amuse and deceive a simple honest mind.
But believe me when I tell you they are
all at bottom (however they may gild
their designs) united by one common
principle in the same Interest. I will not
deny there may be here and there a poor
half-witted Man that means no mischief;
but this I will be bold to say that all the
Men of Sense among them are true at
bottom to these three pursuits of ambition,
avarice and revenge.

IV. While *Alciphron* was speaking, a
Servant came to tell him and *Lysicles*, that
some Men who were going to *London*
waited to receive their orders. Where-
upon they both rose up and went towards
the house. They were no sooner gone, but
Euphranor addressing himself to *Crito* said,
he believed that poor Gentleman had been
a great sufferer for his Free-thinking, for
that he seemed to express himself with
the

the passion and Resentment natural to Men DIAL.
who have received very bad usage. I be- I.
lieve no such thing, answered *Crito*, but ~~never~~
have often observed those of his Sect run
into two faults of conversation, declaim-
ing and bantering, just as the tragic or the
comic humour prevails. Sometimes they
work themselves into high passions and
are frightened at Spectres of their own
raising. In those fits every Country Cu-
rate passes for an Inquisitor. At other
times they affect a sly facetious manner,
making use of hints and allusions, ex-
pressing little, insinuating much, and upon
the whole seeming to divert themselves
with the Subject and their Adversaries.
But if you wou'd know their opinions
you must make them speak out and keep
close to the point. Persecution for Free-
thinking is a topic they are apt to enlarge
on though without any just cause, every
one being at full liberty to think what
he pleases, there being no such thing in
England that I know as Persecution for
opinion, sentiment, or thought. But in every
Country, I suppose, some care is taken to
restrain petulant Speech, and, whatever
Mens inward thoughts may be, to dis-
courage an outward contempt of what
the public esteemeth Sacred. Whether
this care in *England* hath of late been so
excessive,

DIAL. excessive, as to distress the Subjects of this

I. once free and easy Government; whether
the Free-thinkers can truly complain of
any hardship upon the score of conscience
or opinion, you will better be able to
judge, when you hear from themselves an
account of the numbers, progress and
notions of their Sect: which I doubt not
they will communicate fully and freely,
provided no body present seem shocked or
offended. For in that case it is possible
good manners may put them upon some
reserve. Oh! said *Euphranor*, I am never
angry with any Man for his opinion whe-
ther he be *Jew*, *Turk* or *Idolater*, he may
speak his mind freely to me without fear
of offending. I shou'd even be glad to hear
what he hath to say, provided he saith it
in an ingenuous candid manner. Whoever
digs in the Mine of Truth I look on as my
Fellow-labourer, but if, while I am
taking true pains, he diverts himself with
teizing me and flinging dust in mine Eyes,
I shall soon be tired of him.

V. In the mean time *Alciphron* and
Lysicles having dispatched what they went
about returned to us. *Lysicles* sat down
where he had been before. But *Alciphron*
stood over-against us, with his arms folded
across, and his head reclined on the left
shoulder

shoulder in the posture of a Man medi-DIAL.
tating. We sat silent not to disturb his I.
thoughts ; and after two or three Minutes
he uttered these words, oh Truth ! oh Li-
berty ! after which he remained musing
as before. Upon this *Euphranor* took the
freedom to interrupt him. *Alciphron*, said
he, it is not fair to spend your time in
Soliloquies. The conversation of learned
and knowing Men is rarely to be met with
in this corner, and the opportunity you
have put into my Hands I value too much,
not to make the best use of it. *ALC.*
Are you then in earnest a Votary of Truth,
and is it possible you shou'd bear the
liberty of a fair Inquiry ? *EUPH.* It is
what I desire of all things. *ALC.* What !
upon every Subject ? upon the notions you
first sucked in with your Milk, and which
have been ever since nursed by parents,
pastors, tutors, religious assemblies, books
of Devotion and such methods of pre-
possessing Mens minds. *EUPH.* I love
information upon all Subjects that come
in my way, and especially upon those
that are most important. *ALC.* If then
you are in earnest hold fair and stand
firm, while I probe your prejudices and
extirpate your principles.

Dum veteres avias tibi de pulmone re-
vello.

C

Having

DIAL. Having said thus, *Alciphron* knit his brows
I. and made a short pause, after which he
proceeded in the following manner. If
we are at the pains to dive and penetrate
into the bottom of things, and analyse
Opinions into their first principles, we
shall find that those Opinions which are
thought of greatest consequence have the
slightest original, being derived either
from the casual customs of the Country
where we live, or from early instruction
instilled into our tender minds, before we
are able to discern between right and
wrong, true and false. The Vulgar (by
whom I understand all those who do not
make a free use of their Reason) are apt to
take these prejudices for things sacred and
unquestionable, believing them to be im-
printed on the hearts of Men by God
himself, or convey'd by Revelation from
Heaven, or to carry with them so great
light and evidence as must force an assent
without any inquiry or examination.
Thus the shallow Vulgar have their heads
furnished with sundry conceits, principles
and doctrines, religious, moral and political,
all which they maintain with a zeal pro-
portionable to their want of Reason. On
the other hand, those who duly employ
their faculties in the search of Truth, take
especial care to weed out of their minds
and

and extirpate all such notions or prejudices DIAL.
as were planted in them before they ar- I.
rived at the free and intire use of Reason. —
This difficult task hath been successfully
performed by our modern Free-thinkers,
who have not only dissected with great
Sagacity the received Systemes, and traced
every established prejudice to the foun-
tain-head; the true and genuine motives
of assent: But also, having been able to
embrace in one comprehensive view the
several parts and ages of the World, they
observed a wonderful variety of Customs
and Rites, of Institutions Religious and
Civil, of Notions and Opinions very un-
like and even contrary one to another: A
certain sign they cannot all be true. And
yet they are all maintained by their seve-
ral Partisans with the same positive air
and warm zeal, and if examined will be
found to bottom on one and the same
Foundation, the strength of prejudice. By
the help of these Remarks and Discove-
ries, they have broke through the bands of
popular Custom, and having freed them-
selves from Imposture do now generously
lend a hand to their Fellow Subjects, to
lead them into the same paths of Light
and Liberty. Thus, Gentlemen, I have
given you a summary account of the
views and endeavours of those Men who

DIAL. are called Free-thinkers. If in the course of
I. what I have said or shall say hereafter, there
be some things contrary to your pre-con-
ceived Opinions, and therefore shocking
and disagreeable, you will pardon the free-
dom and plainness of a Philosopher, and
consider that, whatever displeasure I give
you of that kind, I do it in strict regard
to Truth and Obedience to your own
commands. I am very sensible, that Eyes
long kept in the dark cannot bear a sud-
den view of noon day light, but must be
brought to it by degrees. It is for this
Reason, the ingenious Gentlemen of our
Profession are accustomed to proceed gra-
dually, beginning with those prejudices to
which Men have the least Attachment,
and thence proceeding to undermine the
rest by slow and insensible degrees, till
they have demolished the whole Fabric
of Humane Folly and Superstition. But
the little time I can propose to spend here
obligeth me to take a shorter course, and
be more direct and plain than possibly
may be thought to suit with Prudence
and good Manners. Upon this, we as-
sured him he was at full liberty to speak
his mind of Things, Persons and Opini-
ons without the least reserve. It is a
liberty, replied *Alciphron*, that we Free-
thinkers are equally willing to give and
take

take. We love to call things by their DIAL.
right Names, and cannot endure that
Truth shou'd suffer through Complai-
fance. Let us therefore lay it down for
a Preliminary, that no offence be taken at
any thing whatsoever shall be said on
either side. To which we all agreed.

I.

VI. In order then, said *Alciphron*, to
find out the Truth, we will suppose that
I am bred up, for instance in the Church
of *England*. When I come to maturity
of Judgment and reflect on the particular
Worship and Opinions of this Church, I
do not remember when or by what
means they first took possession of my
mind, but there I find them from time
immemorial. Then casting an Eye on the
Education of Children, from whence I
can make a judgment of my own, I ob-
serve they are instructed in religious mat-
ters before they can reason about them,
and consequently that all such instruction
is nothing else but filling the tender
mind of a Child with prejudices. I do
therefore reject all those religious notions,
which I consider as the other Follies of
my Childhood. I am confirmed in this
way of thinking, when I look abroad into
the World, where I observe Papists and
several Sects of Dissenters which do all

DIAL. agree in a general profession of Belief in
I. Christ, but differ vastly one from another
in the particulars of Faith and Worship.
I then enlarge my view so as to take in
Jews and *Mahometans*, between whom
and the Christians I perceive indeed some
small agreement in the Belief of one God ;
but then they have each their distinct
Laws and Revelations, for which they ex-
press the same regard. But extending my
view still further to Heathenish and Ido-
latrous Nations I discover an endless
variety, not only in particular Opinions
and Modes of Worship, but even in the very
notion of a Deity, wherein they widely
differ one from another, and from all the
forementioned Sects. Upon the whole,
instead of Truth simple and uniform I
perceive nothing but Discord, Opposition
and wild Pretensions, all springing from
the same source to wit the prejudice of
Education. From such reasonings and
reflections as these, thinking Men have
concluded that all Religions are alike false
and fabulous. One is a Christian, ano-
ther a Jew, a third a Mahometan, a fourth
an Idolatrous Gentile, but all from one
and the same reason, because they happen
to be bred up each in his respective Sect.
In the same manner, therefore, as each
of these contending Parties condemns the
rest,

rest, so an unprejudiced stander-by will DIAL.
condemn and reject them all together, ob- I.
serving that they all draw their origin
from the same fallacious Principle, and
are carried on by the same Artifice to an-
swer the same ends of the Priest and the
Magistrate.

VII. *EUPH.* You hold then that the Magistrate concurs with the Priest in imposing on the People. *ALC.* I do, and so must every one who considers things in a true light. For you must know, the Magistrates principal aim is to keep the People under him in awe. Now the public Eye restrains Men from open Offences against the Laws and Government. But to prevent secret Transgressions a Magistrate finds it expedient, that Men shou'd believe there is an Eye of Providence watching over their private Actions and Designs. And, to intimidate those who might otherwise be drawn into Crimes by the prospect of Pleasure and Profit, he gives them to understand, that whoever escapes Punishment in this Life will be sure to find it in the next, and that so heavy and lasting as infinitely to overbalance the Pleasure and Profit accrewing from his Crimes. Hence the Belief of a God, the Immortality of the Soul, and a future

DIAL. future state of Rewards and Punishments
I. have been esteemed useful Engines of
— Government. And to the end that these
notional airy Doctrines might make a sensible
impression, and be retained on the
minds of Men, skilful Rulers have in the
several civilized Nations of the Earth
devised Temples, Sacrifices, Churches,
Rites, Ceremonies, Habits, Music, Prayer,
Preaching, and the like spiritual trumpery,
whereby the Priest maketh temporal
gains, and the Magistrate findeth his
account in frightening and subduing the
People. This is the original of the Com-
bination between Church and State, of
Religion by Law established, of rights,
immunities and incomes of Priests all over
the World: There being no Government
but wou'd haue you fear God that you
may honour the King or civil Power.
And you will ever observe that politic
Princes keep up a good understanding
with their Clergy, to the end that they in
return, by inculcating Religion and
Loyalty into the minds of the People,
may render them tame, timorous and
slavish. *Crito* and I heard this Discourse
of *Alcibiadon* with the utmost attention,
though without any appearance of sur-
prise, there being indeed nothing in it to
us new or unexpected. But *Euphranor*,
who

who had never before been present at DIAL. such Conversation, cou'd not help shewing some Astonishment, which *Lysicles* observing, asked him with a lively Air, how he liked *Alciphron's* Lecture. It is, said he, the first I believe that you ever heard of the kind, and requireth a strong Stomach to digest it. *EUPH.* I will own to you that my Digestion is none of the quickest; but it hath sometimes, by degrees, been able to master things which at first appeared indigestible. At present I admire the free Spirit and Eloquence of *Alciphron*, but, to speak the Truth, I am rather astonished, than convinced of the Truth of his Opinions. How (said he turning to *Alciphron*) is it then possible you shou'd not believe the Being of a God? *ALC.* To be plain with you, I do not.

VIII. But this is what I foresaw, a Flood of Light let in at once upon the Mind being apt to dazzle and disorder, rather than enlighten it. Was I not pinched in Time, the regular way would be to have begun with the Circumstantials of Religion, next to have attacked the Mysteries of Christianity, after that proceeded to the practical Doctrines, and in the last place to have extirpated that which

DIAL. which of all other religious Prejudices,
I. being the first taught, and Basis of the
rest, hath taken the deepest root in our
Minds, I mean the Belief of a God. I
do not wonder it sticks with you, ha-
ving known several very ingenious Men
who found it difficult to free themselves
from this Prejudice. EUPH. All Men
have not the same Alacrity and Vigour in
thinking: for my own part, I find it
a hard matter to keep pace with you.
ALC. To help you, I will go a little
way back, and resume the Thread of my
Reasoning. First I must acquaint you,
That having applied my Mind to con-
template the Idea of Truth, I discovered
it to be of a stable, permanent, and uni-
form nature; not various and changeable,
like Modes or Fashions, and things de-
pending on Fancy. In the next place,
having observed several Sects, and Subdi-
visions of Sects espousing very different
and contrary Opinions, and yet all pro-
fessing Christianity, I rejected those Points
wherein they differed, retaining only that
which was agreed to by all, and so be-
came a *Latitudinarian*. Having after-
wards, upon a more enlarged View of
things, perceived that Christians, Jews,
and Mahometans had each their different
Systems of Faith, agreeing only in the Be-
lief

lief of one God, I became a *Deist*. Lastly, DIAL.
extending my View to all the other va- I.
rious Nations which inhabit this Globe,
and finding they agreed in no one Point
of Faith, but differed one from another,
as well as from the forementioned Sects,
even in the Notion of a God, in which
there is as great Diversity as in the Me-
thods of Worship, I thereupon became
an *Atheist*: it being my Opinion that a
Man of Courage and Sense shou'd follow
his Argument wherever it leads him, and
that nothing is more ridiculous than to
be a Free-thinker by halves. I approve
the Man who makes thorough Work, and
not content with lopping off the Branches,
extirpates the very Root from which they
sprung.

IX. Atheism therefore, that Bugbear of
Women and Fools, is the very Top and
Perfection of Free-thinking. It is the
grand *Arcanum* to which a true Genius
naturally riseth, by a certain Climax or
Gradation of Thought, and without which
he can never possess his Soul in absolute
Liberty and Repose. For your thorough
Conviction in this main Article, do but
examine the Notion of a God with the
same Freedom that you would other Pre-
judices. Trace it to the fountain-head,
and

DIAL. and you shall not find that you had it by
I. any of your Senses, the only true means
of discovering what is real and substantial in Nature: You will find it lying amongst other old Lumber in some obscure corner of the Imagination, the proper Receptacle of Visions, Fancies, and Prejudices of all kinds; and if you are more attached to this than the rest, it is only because it is the oldest. This is all, take my Word for it, and not mine only, but that of many more the most ingenious Men of the Age, who, I can assure you, think as I do on the Subject of a Deity. Though some of them hold it proper, to proceed with more Reserve in declaring to the World their Opinion in this Particular, than in most others. And it must be owned, there are still too many in *England* who retain a foolish Prejudice against the Name of Atheist. But it lessens every Day among the better sort: and when it is quite worn out, our Free-thinkers may then, (and not till then) be said to have given the finishing Stroke to Religion; it being evident that so long as the Existence of God is believed, Religion must subsist in some Shape or other. But the Root being once plucked up, the Scions which shot from it will of course wither and decay. Such are

are all those whimsical Notions of Con- DIAL.
science, Duty, Principle, and the like, I.
which fill a Man's Head with Scruples,
awe him with Fears, and make him a
more thorough Slave than the Horse he
rides. A Man had better a thousand
times be hunted by Bailiffs or Messengers
than haunted by these Spectres, which em-
barass and embitter all his Pleasures, cre-
ating the most real and sore Servitude
upon Earth. But the Free-thinker, with
a vigorous flight of Thought breaks
through those airy Springes, and asserts
his original Independency. Others in-
deed may talk, and write, and fight a-
bout Liberty, and make an outward Pre-
tence to it, but the Free-thinker alone
is truly free. *Alciphron* having ended this
Discourse with an Air of Triumph,
Euphranor spoke to him in the follow-
ing manner. You make clear Work.
The Gentlemen of your Profession are,
it seems, admirable Weeders. You have
rooted up a world of Notions, I shou'd
be glad to see what fine things you have
planted in their stead. *ALC.* Have Pa-
tience, good *Euphranor*. I will shew you
in the first place, That whatever was
found and good we leave untouched,
and encourage it to grow in the Mind
of Man. And secondly, I will shew you
what

DIAL. what excellent things we have planted
I. in it. You must know then, that pur-
suing our close and severe Scrutiny, we
do at last arrive at something solid and
real, in which all Mankind agree, to wit,
the Appetites, Passions, and Senses: These
are founded in Nature, are real, have real
Objects, and are attended with real and
substantial Pleasures; Food, Drink, Sleep,
and the like animal Enjoyments being
what all Men like and love. And if we
extend our view to the other kinds of
Animals, we shall find them all agree
in this, that they have certain natural
Appetites and Senses, in the gratifying
and satisfying of which they are con-
stantly employ'd. Now these real natu-
ral good things which include nothing
of Notion or Fancy, we are so far from
destroying, that we do all we can to
cherish and improve them. According
to us, every wise Man looks upon him-
self, or his own bodily Existence in this
present World, as the Center and ulti-
mate End of all his Actions and Regards.
He considers his Appetites as natural
Guides directing to his proper Good,
his Passions and Senses as the natural
true Means of enjoying this Good. Hence
he endeavours to keep his Appetites in
high Relish, his Passions and Senses strong
and

and lively, and to provide the greatest DIAL.
Quantity and Variety of real Objects suited to them, which he studieth to enjoy by all possible means, and in the highest Perfection imaginable. And the Man who can do this without Restraint, Remorse, or Fear, is as happy as any other Animal whatsoever, or as his Nature is capable of being. Thus I have given you a succinct View of the Principles, Discoveries, and Tenets of the select Spirits of this enlightened Age.

X. *Crito* remarked, that *Alciphron* had spoke his Mind with great Clearness. Yes, replied *Euphranor*, we are obliged to the Gentleman for letting us at once into the Tenets of his Sect. But, if I may be allowed to speak my Mind, *Alciphron*, though in compliance with my own Request, hath given me no small Uneasiness. You need, said *Alciphron*, make no Apology for speaking freely what you think to one who professeth himself a Free-thinker. I shou'd be sorry to make one, whom I meant to oblige, uneasy. Pray let me know wherein I have offended. I am half ashamed, replied *Euphranor*, to own that I who am no great Genius have a Weakness incidental to little ones. I wou'd say that
I have

DIAL. I have favourite Opinions, which you represent to be Errors and Prejudices. For Instance, the Immortality of the Soul is a Notion I am fond of, as what supports the Mind with a very pleasing Prospect. And if it be an Error, I shou'd perhaps be of *Tully's* Mind, who in that Case professed he shou'd be sorry to know the Truth, acknowledging no sort of Obligation to certain Philosophers in his Days, who taught the Soul of Man was mortal. They were, it seems, Predecessors to those who are now called Free-thinkers; which Name being too general and indefinite, inasmuch as it comprehends all those who think for themselves, whether they agree in Opinion with these Gentlemen or no, it shou'd not seem amiss to assign them a specific Appellation or peculiar Name, whereby to distinguish them from other Philosophers, at least in our present Conference. For I cannot bear to argue against Free-thinking and Free-thinkers.

ALC. In the Eyes of a wise Man Words are of small moment. We do not think Truth attached to a Name. EUPH. If you please then, to avoid Confusion, let us call your Sect by the same Name that *Tully* (who understood the force of Language) bestow'd upon them. ALC. With all

all my heart. Pray what may that Name DIAL.
be? EUPH. Why, he calls them *Min-* I.
nute Philosophers. Right, said *Crito*, the ~~modern~~
modern Free-thinkers are the very same
with those *Cicero* called Minute Philo-
phers, which Name admirably suits them,
they being a sort of Sect which dimi-
nish all the most valuable things, the
thoughts, views, and hopes of Men;
all the Knowledge, Notions, and Theo-
ries of the Mind they reduce to Sense;
Humane Nature they contract and degrade
to the narrow low Standard of Animal
Life, and assign us only a small pittance
of Time instead of Immortality. *Alci-*
phron very gravely remarked, That the
Gentlemen of his Sect had done no in-
jury to Man, and that if he be a little,
shortlived, contemptible Animal, it was
not their saying it made him so: And
they were no more to blame for what-
ever defects they discover, than a faith-
ful Glass for making the wrinkles which
it only shews. As to what you observe,
said he, of those we now call Free-
thinkers having been anciently termed
Minute Philosophers, it is my opinion
this Appellation might be derived from
their considering things minutely, and
not swallowing them in the gross, as o-
ther Men are used to do. Besides, we

D

all

DIAL. all know the best Eyes are necessary to
I. discern the minutest Objects: It seems
therefore, that Minute Philosophers might
have been so called from their distin-
guished perspicacity. EUPH. O *Alci-
phron!* these Minute Philosophers (since
that is their true Name) are a sort of
Pirates who plunder all that come in
their way. I consider my self as a Man
left stript and desolate on a bleak Beach.

XI. But who are these profound and learned Men that of late Years have demolished the whole Fabric which Lawgivers, Philosophers and Divines had been erecting for so many Ages? *Lysicles* hearing these words, smiled, and said he believed *Euphranor* had figured to himself Philosophers in square caps and long gowns: but, thanks to these happy Times, the Reign of Pedantry was over. Our Philosophers, said he, are of a very different kind from those awkward Students, who think to come at Knowledge by poring on dead Languages, and old Authors, or by sequestring themselves from the Cares of the World to meditate in Solitude and Retirement. They are the best bred Men of the Age, Men who know the World, Men of pleasure, Men of fashion, and fine Gentlemen.

EUPH.

EUPH. I have some small notion of DIAL.
the People you mention, but shou'd ne- I.
ver have taken them for Philosophers.

CRI. Nor wou'd any one else till of
late. The World it seems was long un-
der a mistake about the way to Know-
ledge, thinking it lay through a tedious
course of Academical Education and Stu-
dy. But among the Discoveries of the
present Age, one of the principal is the
finding out that such a Method doth ra-
ther retard and obstruct, than promote
Knowledge. ALC. Academical Study
may be comprised in two points, Read-
ing and Meditation. Their Reading is
chiefly employ'd on ancient Authors in
dead Languages: so that a great part of
their Time is spent in learning Words,
which, when they have mastered with
infinite pains, what do they get by it
but old and obsolete Notions, that are
now quite exploded and out of use?
Then, as to their Meditations, what can
they possibly be good for? He that
wants the proper Materials of Thought,
may think and meditate for ever to no
purpose: Those Cobwebs spun by Scho-
lars out of their own Brains being alike
unserviceable, either for Use or Orna-
ment. Proper Ideas or Materials are on-
ly to be got by frequenting good Com-

D 2 pany.

DIAL. pany. I know several Gentlemen, who,
I. since their Appearance in the World, have
spent as much time in rubbing off the
rust and pedantry of a College Educa-
tion, as they had done before in acqui-
ring it. *LYS.* I'll undertake, a Lad of
fourteen, bred in the modern way, shall
make a better Figure, and be more con-
sidered in any Drawing-Room or Assem-
bly of polite People, than one of four
and twenty, who hath lain by a long
time at School and College. He shall
say better things, in a better manner,
and be more liked by good Judges.
EUPH. Where doth he pick up all this
Improvement? *CRI.* Where our grave
Ancestors wou'd never have look'd for it,
in a Drawing-Room, a Coffee-House, a
Chocolate - House, at the Tavern, or
Groom-Porter's. In these and the like
fashionable Places of Resort, it is the
Custom for polite Persons to speak free-
ly on all Subjects, religious, moral, or
political. So that a young Gentleman
who frequents them is in the way of
hearing many instructive Lectures, sea-
soned with Wit and Raillery, and utter-
ed with Spirit. Three or four Sentences
from a Man of quality spoke with a
good Air, make more Impression, and
convey more Knowledge, than a dozen
Differ-

Dissertations in a dry Academical way. DIAL.

EUPH. There is then no Method I.

or Course of Studies in those Places.

LYS. None but an easy free Conversation, which takes in every thing that offers, without any Rule or Design. EUPH. I always thought that some Order was necessary to attain any useful degree of Knowledge, that Haste and Confusion begat a conceited Ignorance, that to make our Advances sure, they shou'd be gradual, and those Points first learned which might cast a light on what was to follow.

ALC. So long as Learning was to be obtained only by that slow formal course of Study, few of the better sort knew much of it; but now it is grown an Amusement, our young Gentry and Nobility imbibe it insensibly amidst their Diversions, and make a considerable Progress. EUPH. Hence probably the great number of Minute Philosophers. CRI. It is to this that Sect is owing for so many ingenious Proficients of both Sexes. You may now commonly see (what no former Age ever saw) a young Lady, or a *Petit Maitre* nonplus a Divine or an old-fashioned Gentleman, who hath read many a Greek and Latin Author, and spent much Time in hard methodical Study.

EUPH. It shou'd seem then that Me-

D 3 thod,

DIAL. thod, Exactnes, and Industry are a Dis-
I. advantage. Here *Alciphron*, turning to
Lysicles, said he cou'd make the point
very clear, if *Euphranor* had any notion
of Painting. EUPH. I never saw a
first-rate Picture in my Life, but have a
tolerable Collection of Prints, and have
seen some good Drawings. ALC. You
know then the difference between the
Dutch and the *Italian* manner. EUPH. I
have some notion of it. ALC. Sup-
pose now a Drawing finished by the
nice and laborious Touches of a *Dutch*
Pencil, and another off-hand scratched
out in the free manner of a great *Ita-
lian* Master. The *Dutch* Piece, which
hath cost so much pains and time will
be exact indeed, but without that Force,
Spirit, or Grace, which appear in the o-
ther, and are the Effects of an easy free
Pencil. Do but apply this, and the
Point will be clear. EUPH. Pray in-
form me, did those great *Italian* Masters
begin and proceed in their Art without
any choice of Method or Subject, and
always draw with the same ease and
freedom? Or did they observe some
Method, beginning with simple and ele-
mentary parts, an Eye, a Nose, a Finger,
which they drew with great pains and
care, often drawing the same thing, in
order

order to draw it correctly, and so proceeding with Patience and Industry, till after a considerable length of Time they arrived at the free masterly manner you speak of. If this were the Case, I leave you to make the Application. *ALC.* You may dispute the Matter if you please. But a Man of parts is one thing, and a Pedant another. Pains and Method may do for some sort of People. A Man must be a long time kindling wet Straw into a vile smothering Flame, but Spirits blaze out at once. *EUPH.* The Minute Philosophers have, it seems, better Parts than other Men, which qualifies them for a different Education. *ALC.* Tell me, *Euphranor,* what is it that gives one Man a better Mien than another; more Politeness in Dress, Speech, and Motion? Nothing but frequenting good Company. By the same means Men get insensibly a delicate Taste, a refined Judgment, a certain Politeness in thinking and expressing one's self. No wonder if you Country-men are strangers to the Advantage of polite Conversation, which constantly keeps the Mind awake and active, exercising its Faculties, and calling forth all its Strength and Spirit on a thousand different Occasions and Subjects, that never came in the way of a Book-worm in a College, no

DIAL. more than of a Ploughman. CRI. Hence
I. those lively Faculties, that quickness of
Apprehension, that slyness of Ridicule,
that egregious Talent of Wit and Hu-
mour which distinguish the Gentlemen of
your Profession. EUPH. It shou'd seem
then that your Sect is made up of what
you call fine Gentlemen. LYS. Not al-
together, for we have among us some con-
templative Spirits of a coarser Education,
who, from observing the Behaviour and
Proceedings of Apprentices, Watermen,
Porters, and the Assemblies of Rabble in
the Streets, have arrived at a profound
Knowledge of Humane Nature, and made
great Discoveries about the Principles,
Springs, and Motives of moral Actions.
These have demolished the received Sys-
tems, and done a world of good in the
City. ALC. I tell you we have Men of
all Sorts and Professions, plodding Citi-
zens, thriving Stockjobbers, skilful Men
in Business, polite Courtiers, gallant Men
of the Army; but our chief Strength and
Flower of the Flock are those promising
young Men who have the Advantage of a
modern Education. These are the growing
Hopes of our Sect, by whose Credit and In-
fluence in a few Years we expect to see those
great things accomplished that we have
in view. EUPH. I cou'd never have
imagined

imagined your Sect so considerable. *ALC. DIAL.*
There are in *England* many honest Folk I.
as much in the dark about these matters
as your selves.

XII. To judge of the prevailing Opinion among People of fashion, by what a Senator saith in the House, a Judge upon the Bench, or a Priest in the Pulpit, who all speak according to Law, that is, to the reverend prejudices of our Forefathers, wou'd be wrong. You shou'd go into good Company, and mind what Men of parts and breeding say, those who are best heard and most admired as well in public places of resort, as in private visits. He only who hath these opportunities, can know our real strength, our numbers and the figure that we make. *EUPH.* By your account there must be many Minute Philosophers among the Men of Rank and Fortune. *ALC.* Take my word for it, not a few, and they do much contribute to the spreading our notions. For he who knows the World must observe, that fashions constantly descend. It is therefore the right way to propagate an Opinion from the upper end. Not to say that the Patronage of such Men is an encouragement to our Authors.

EUPH.

DIAL. *EUPH.* It seems then you have Authors

I. among you. *LYS.* That we have several, and those very great Men who have obliged the World with many useful and profound discoveries. *CRI.* *Moschon* for instance hath proved that Man and Beast are really of the same nature: That consequently a Man need only indulge his Senses and Appetites to be as happy as a Brute. *Gorgias* hath gone further, demonstrating Man to be a piece of Clock-work or Machine: and that Thought or Reason are the same thing as the impulse of one Ball against another. *Cimon* hath made noble use of these discoveries, proving as clearly as any proposition in Mathematics, that conscience is a whim and morality a prejudice: and that a Man is no more accountable for his actions than a Clock is for striking. *Tryphon* hath written irrefragably on the usefulness of vice. *Thrasenor* hath confuted the foolish prejudice Men had against Atheism, shewing that a republick of Atheists might live very happily together. *Demylus* hath made a jest of Loyalty, and convinced the World there is nothing in it: To him and another Philosopher of the same stamp this age is indebted for discovering, that public Spirit is an idle Enthusiasm which seizeth

feizeth only on weak minds. It wou'd be DIAL.
endless to recount the discoveries made I,
by writers of this Sect. LYS. But the —
Master-piece and finishing Stroke is a
learned Anecdote of our great *Diagoras*,
containing a demonstration against the
Being of God; which it is conceived
the public is not yet ripe for. But I
am assured by some judicious Friends who
have seen it, that it is as clear as Day-
light, and will do a world of good, at one
blow demolishing the whole System of
Religion. These discoveries are published
by our Philosophers, sometimes in just
Volumes, but often in Pamphlets and
loose Papers for their readier conveyance
through the Kingdom. And to them must
be ascribed that absolute and independent
freedom, which groweth so fast to the
terroure of all Bigots. Even the dull and
ignorant begin to open their Eyes, and
to be influenced by the example and au-
thority of so many ingenious Men.
EUPH. It shou'd seem by this account
that your Sect extend their discoveries
beyond Religion; and that Loyalty to
his Prince or Reverence for the Laws are
but mean things in the Eye of a Minute
Philosopher. LYS. Very mean, we are
too wise to think there is any thing Sa-
cred either in King or Constitution, or
indeed

DIAL. indeed in any thing else. A Man of Sense

I. may perhaps seem to pay an occasional regard to his Prince, but this is no more at bottom than what he pays to God when he kneels at the Sacrament to qualify himself for an Office. Fear God, and honour the King, are a pair of slavish maxims, which had for a long time cramp't Humane Nature, and awed not only weak minds but even Men of good Understanding, till their Eyes, as I observed before, were opened by our Philosophers. EUPH. Methinks I can easily comprehend that, when the fear of God is quite extinguished, the mind must be very easy with respect to other Duties, which become outward pretences and formalities, from the moment that they quit their hold upon the Conscience, and Conscience always supposeth the Being of a God. But I still thought that *Englishmen* of all denominations (how widely soever they differ as to some particular points) agreed in the Belief of a God, and of so much at least, as is called natural Religion. ALC. I have already told you my own Opinion of those matters, and what I know to be the Opinion of many more. CRI. Probably, *Euphranor*, by the title of *Deists*, which is sometimes given to Minute Philosophers, you have been

been mis-led to imagine they believe and DIAL.
worship a God according to the light of
Nature: but by living among them, you
may soon be convinced of the contrary.

I.

They have neither time nor place, nor
form of Divine worship; they offer
neither Prayers nor Praises to God in
public; and in their private practice shew
a contempt or dislike even of the Duties
of natural Religion. For instance, the
saying grace before and after meals is a
plain point of natural worship, and was
once universally practised, but in propor-
tion as this Sect prevailed it hath been
laid aside, not only by the Minute Philo-
sophers themselves, who wou'd be infi-
nitely ashamed of such a weakness as to
beg God's blessing, or give God thanks for
their daily Food; but also by others who
are afraid of being thought Fools by the
Minute Philosophers. *EUPH.* Is it pos-
sible that Men, who really believe a God,
shou'd yet decline paying so easy and rea-
sonable a Duty for fear of incurring the
contempt of Atheists? *CRI.* I tell you
there are many, who believing in their
Hearts the truth of Religion, are yet
afraid or ashamed to own it, lest they
shou'd forfeit their Reputation with those
who have the good luck to pass for great

wits

DIAL. wits and Men of genius. ALC. O Eu-
I. phranor, we must make allowance for
Crito's prejudice: he is a worthy Gentle-
man and means well. But doth it not look
like prejudice to ascribe the respect that is
paid our ingenious Free-thinkers rather to
good luck than to merit? EUPH. I
acknowledge their merit to be very won-
derful, and that those Authors must needs
be great Men who are able to prove such
Paradoxes: for example, That so knowing
a Man as a Minute Philosopher shou'd be
a meer Machine, or at best no better than
a Brute. ALC. It is a true maxim, that
a Man shou'd think with the Learned and
speak with the Vulgar. I shou'd be loth
to place a Gentleman of merit in such a
light, before prejudiced and ignorant Men.
The tenets of our Philosophy have this in
common with many other Truths, in
Metaphysics, Geometry, Astronomy and
natural Philosophy, that vulgar ears can-
not bear them. All our discoveries and
notions are in themselves true and cer-
tain; but they are at present known only
to the better sort, and wou'd sound
strange and odd among the Vulgar. But
this, it is to be hoped, will wear off
with time. EUPH. I do not wonder
that vulgar minds shou'd be startled at
the

the notions of your Philosophy. C.R.I. DIAL.
Truly a very curious sort of Philosophy, I.
and much to be admired!

XIII. The profound Thinkers of this way have taken a direct contrary course to all the great Philosophers of former ages, who made it their Endeavour to raise and refine Humane Kind, and remove it as far as possible from the Brute; to moderate and subdue Mens Appetites; to remind them of the dignity of their nature; to awaken and improve their superior Faculties and direct them to the noblest Objects; to possess Mens minds with a high Sense of the Divinity, of the supreme Good, and the Immortality of the Soul. They took great pains to strengthen the Obligations to Vertue, and upon all those Subjects have wrought out noble Theorys, and treated with singular force of Reason. But it seems our Minute Philosophers act the reverse of all other wise and thinking Men; it being their end and aim to erase the Principles of all that is great and good from the mind of Man, to unhinge all order of civil Life, to undermine the foundations of morality, and, instead of improving and ennobling our natures, to bring us down to the maxims and way of thinking
of

DIAL. of the most uneducated and barbarous nations, and even to degrade Humane Kind to a level with Brute Beasts. And all the while they wou'd pass upon the World for Men of deep Knowledge. But in effect what is all this negative Knowledge better than downright savage Ignorance? That there is no Providence, no Spirit, no future State, no moral Duty: truly a fine System for an honest Man to own, or an ingenious Man to value himself upon! *Alciphron* who heard this discourse with some uneasiness very gravely replied. Disputes are not to be decided by the weight of Authority, but by the force of Reason. You may pass, indeed, general reflexions on our notions, and call them brutal and barbarous if you please: But it is such brutality and such barbarism as few cou'd have attained to if Men of the greatest Genius had not broke the Ice, there being nothing more difficult than to get the the better of Education, and conquer old prejudices. To remove and cast off a heap of Rubbish that has been gathering upon the Soul from our very infancy, requires great courage and great strength of Faculties. Our Philosophers therefore, do well deserve the name of *Esprits forts, Men of strong heads, Free-thinkers* and such like Appel-

Appellations betokening great force and DIAL.
liberty of mind. It is very possible, the I.
Heroic Labours of these Men may be re-
presented (for what is not capable of mis-
representation?) as a piratical plundering
and stripping the mind of its wealth and
ornaments, when it is in truth the di-
vesting it only of its prejudices, and re-
ducing it to its untainted original State
of Nature. Oh Nature! the genuine
Beauty of pure Nature! EUPH. You
seem very much taken with the Beauty
of Nature. Be pleased to tell me, *Alci-*
phron, what those things are which you
esteem natural, or by what mark I may
know them.

XIV. *ALC.* For a thing to be natural,
for instance to the mind of Man, it must
appear originally therein, it must be uni-
versally in all Men, it must be invariably
the same in all Nations and Ages. These
limitations of original, universal and in-
variable exclude all those notions found in
the Humane Mind, which are the effect
of Custom and Education. The case is
the same with respect to all other Spe-
cies of Beings. A Cat, for example,
hath a natural inclination to pursue a
Mouse, because it agrees with the fore-
mentioned marks. But if a Cat be taught

E to

DIAL. to play tricks, you will not say those
I. tricks are natural. For the same reason
 if upon a Plumbtree, Peaches and Apricots
are engrafted, no body will say they are
the natural growth of the Plumbtree.
EUPH. But to return to *Man*: It seems
you allow those things alone to be natural
to him, which shew themselves upon his
first entrance into the World; to wit the
Senses and such Passions and Appetites as
are discovered upon the first application of
their respective objects. ALC. That is
my opinion. EUPH. Tell me, *Alci-*
pbron, if from a young Appletree after a
certain period of time there shou'd shoot
forth Leaves, Blossoms and Apples; wou'd
you deny these things to be natural, be-
cause they did not discover and display
themselves in the tender bud? ALC. I
wou'd not. EUPH. And suppose that in
a Man after a certain season, the Ap-
petite of Lust or the Faculty of Reason shall
shoot forth, open and display themseves
as Leaves and Blossoms do in a Tree;
wou'd you therefore deny them to be na-
tural to him, because they did not appear
in his original infancy? ALC. I ac-
knowledge I wou'd not. EUPH. It seems
therefore, that the first mark of a thing's
being natural to the mind was not warily
laid down by you; to wit, that it shou'd
appear

appear originally in it. *ALC.* It seems DIAL.
so. *EUPH.* Again, inform me, *Alciphron*, I.
whether you do not think it natural for ~~the~~
an Orange-plant to produce Oranges?

ALC. I do. *EUPH.* But plant it in the North end of *Great Britain*, and it shall with care produce, perhaps, a good Sallad ; in the Southern parts of the same Island, it may with much pains and culture thrive and produce indifferent Fruit ; but in *Portugal* or *Naples* it will produce much better with little or no pains. Is this true or not ? *ALC.* It is true.

EUPH. The Plant being the same in all places doth not produce the same Fruit, Sun, Soil, and Cultivation making a difference. *ALC.* I grant it. *EUPH.* And since the case is, you say, the same with respect to all Species ; why may we not conclude by a parity of reason that things may be natural to Humane Kind, and yet neither found in all Men, nor invariably the same where they are found ?

ALC. Hold, *Euphranor*, you must explain your self further. I shall not be over hasty in my concessions. *LYS.* You are in the right, *Alciphron*, to stand upon your guard. I do not like these ensnaring questions.

EUPH. I desire you to make no concessions in complaisance to me, but only to tell me your opinion upon each particular,

DIAL. that we may understand one another, know
I. wherein we agree, and proceed jointly in
finding out the Truth. But (added *Euphranor* turning to *Crito* and me) if the Gentlemen are against a free and fair inquiry, I shall give them no further trouble. *ALC.* Our Opinions will stand the test. We fear no trial, proceed as you please. *EUPH.* It seems then that from what you have granted it shou'd follow, Things may be natural to Men, although they do not actually shew themselves in all Men, nor in equal perfection; there being as great difference of culture and every other advantage, with respect to Humane Nature, as is to be found with respect to the vegetable nature of Plants, to use your own similitude. Is it so or not? *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* Answer me, *Alciphron*, do not Men in all times and places when they arrive at a certain Age express their Thoughts by Speech? *ALC.* They do. *EUPH.* Shou'd it not seem then that Language is natural? *ALC.* It shou'd. *EUPH.* And yet there is a great variety of Languages. *ALC.* I acknowledge there is. *EUPH.* From all this will it not follow a thing may be natural and yet admit of variety? *ALC.* I grant it will. *EUPH.* Shou'd it not seem therefore to follow, that a thing may be natural

to

to Mankind, though it have not those DIAL.
marks or conditions assigned ; though it
be not original, universal and invariable ?

ALC. It shou'd. EUPH. And that con-
sequently religious Worship and civil Go-
vernment may be natural to Man, not-
withstanding they admit of sundry forms
and different degrees of Perfection ? ALC.

It seems so. EUPH. You have granted
already that Reason is natural to Mankind.

ALC. I have. EUPH. Whatever there-
fore is agreeable to Reason is agreeable
to the nature of Man. ALC. It is.
EUPH. Will it not follow from hence
that Truth and Virtue are natural to Man ?

ALC. Whatever is reasonable I admit to
be natural. EUPH. And as those Fruits
which grow from the most generous and
mature stock, in the choicest soil, and
with the best culture, are most esteemed ;
even so ought we not to think, those sub-
lime Truths which are the Fruits of mature
Thought, and have been rationally de-
duced by Men of the best and most im-
proved understandings, to be the choicest
productions of the rational nature of Man ?
And if so, being in fact reasonable, natu-
ral and true, they ought not to be esteem-
ed unnatural whims, errors of education
and groundless prejudices, because they

DIAL. are raised and forwarded by manuring
I. and cultivating our tender minds, be-
cause they take early root and sprout
forth betimes by the care and diligence
of our Instructors. *ALC.* Agreed, pro-
vided still they may be rationally deduced:
But to take this for granted, of what Men
vulgarly call the Truths of Morality and
Religion wou'd be begging the question.
EUPH. You are in the right, I do not,
therefore, take for granted that they are
rationally deduced. I only suppose that,
if they are, they must be allowed natu-
ral to Man, or in other words agreeable
to, and growing from, the most excellent
and peculiar part of Humane Nature.
ALC. I have nothing to object to this.
EUPH. What shall we think then of
your former Assertions? That nothing is
natural to Man but what may be found in
all Men, in all Nations and Ages of the
World: That to obtain a genuine view of
Humane Nature, we must extirpate all
the effects of Education and Instruction,
and regard only the Senses, Appetites and
Passions which are to be found originally
in all Mankind: That, therefore, the
notion of a God can have no foundation
in nature, as not being originally in the
mind, nor the same in all Men; Be pleased
to reconcile these things with your late
con-

concessions, which the force of Truth seems DIAL.
to have extorted from you.

J.

XV. AL C. Tell me, *Euphranor*, whether Truth be not one and the same uniform invariable thing, and, if so, whether the many different and inconsistent notions which Men entertain of God and Duty be not a plain proof there is no Truth in them. EUPH. That Truth is constant and uniform I freely own, and that consequently Opinions repugnant to each other cannot be true; but I think it will not hence follow they are all alike false. If among various Opinions about the same thing, one be grounded on clear and evident Reasons, that is to be thought true, and others only so far as they consist with it. Reason is the same, and rightly applied will lead to the same conclusions in all times and places. *Socrates* two thousand years ago seems to have reasoned himself into the same notion of a God, which is entertained by the Philosophers of our days, if you will allow that name to any who are not Atheists. And the remark of *Confucius*, That a Man shou'd guard in his youth against Lust, in manhood against Faction, and in old age against Covetousness is as current morality in *Europe* as

DIAL. in *China*. ALC. But still it wou'd be a satisfaction if all Men thought the same way, difference of Opinions implying uncertainty. EUPH. Tell me, *Alciphron*, what you take to be the cause of a Lunar Eclipse. ALC. The shadow of the Earth interposing between the Sun and Moon. EUPH. Are you assured of this? ALC. Undoubtedly. EUPH. Are all Mankind agreed in this Truth? ALC. By no means. Ignorant and barbarous People assign different ridiculous causes of this appearance. EUPH. It seems then there are different Opinions about the nature of an Eclipse. ALC. There are. EUPH. And nevertheless one of these Opinions is true. ALC. It is. EUPH. Diversity therefore of Opinions about a thing doth not hinder, but that thing may be, and one of the Opinions concerning it may be true. ALC. I acknowledge it. EUPH. It shou'd seem, therefore, that your Argument against the Belief of a God from the variety of Opinions about his nature is not conclusive. Nor do I see how you can conclude against the truth of any moral or religious tenet, from the various Opinions of Men upon the same Subject; might not a Man as well argue, that no historical account of a matter of fact can be true, when different relations are given of

of it? Or may we not as well infer, DIAL.
that because the several Sects of Philo- I.
sophy maintain different opinions, none ~~can~~
of them can be in the right, not even the
Minute Philosophers themselves? During
this conversation *Lysicles* seemed uneasy,
like one that wished in his heart there
was no God. *Alciphron*, said he, me-
thinks you sit by very tamely, while *Eu-
phranor* saps the foundation of our Tenets.
Be of good courage, replied *Alciphron*, a
skilful gamester has been known to ruin
his adversary by yielding him some ad-
vantage at first. I am glad, said he
turning to *Euphranor*, that you are drawn
in to argue and make your appeals to
Reason. For my part, wherever Reason
leads I shall not be afraid to follow.
Know then, *Euphranor*, that I freely
give up what you now contend for. I do
not value the success of a few crude no-
tions thrown out in a loose discourse, any
more than the *Turks* do the loss of that vile
infantry they place in the front of their
armies, for no other end but to waste the
powder and blunt the swords of their
enemies. Be assured I have in reserve a
body of othergues arguments, which I
am ready to produce. I will undertake
to prove----- *EUPH.* O *Alciphron!* I
do not doubt your faculty of proving.

But

DIAL. But before I put you to the trouble of
I. any farther proofs, I shou'd be glad to
know whether the notions of your Mi-
nute Philosophy are worth proving. I
mean, whether they are of use and service
to Mankind?

XV. ALC. As to that, give me leave
to tell you, a thing may be useful to
one Man's Views, and not to another's:
but Truth is Truth whether useful or not,
and must not be measured by the Conve-
nience and this or that Man, or Party of
Men. EUPH. But is not the general
Good of Mankind to be regarded as a
rule of measure of moral Truths, of all
such Truths as direct or influence the mo-
ral Actions of Men? ALC. That Point
is not clear to me. I know, indeed, that
Legislators, and Divines, and Politicians
have always alledged, That it is necessa-
ry to the wellbeing of Mankind, that
they shou'd be kept in awe by the fla-
vish Notions of Religion and Morality.
But granting all this, how will it prove
these Notions to be true? Convenience
is one thing, and Truth is another. A
genuine Philosopher, therefore, will o-
verlook all Advantages and consider on-
ly Truth it self as such. EUPH. Tell
me, *Alciphron*, is your genuine Philoso-
pher

pher a wise Man, or a Fool? *ALC.* With- DIAL.
out question, the wisest of Men. I.

EUPH. Which is to be thought the
wise Man, he who acts with design, or
he who acts at random? *ALC.* He
who acts with design. *EUPH.* Who-
ever acts with design, acts for some end.
Doth he not? *ALC.* He doth. *EUPH.* And
a wise Man for a good end? *ALC.* True.
EUPH. And he sheweth his Wisdom in
making choice of fit means to obtain his
end. *ALC.* I acknowledge it. *EUPH.* By
how much therefore the end proposed is
more excellent, and by how much fitter
the means employed are to obtain it, so
much the wiser is the Agent to be e-
steemed. *ALC.* This seems to be true.
EUPH. Can a rational Agent propose a
more excellent end than Happiness?
ALC. He cannot. *EUPH.* Of good
things, the greater Good is most excellent.
ALC. Doubtless. *EUPH.* Is not the
general happiness of Mankind a greater
Good, than the private happiness of one
Man, or of some certain Men? *ALC.* It
is. *EUPH.* Is it not therefore the
most excellent end? *ALC.* It seems so.
EUPH. Are not then those who pursue
this end by the propereſt methods to be
thought the wisest Men? *ALC.* I grant
they are. *EUPH.* Which is a wise
Man

DIAL. Man govern'd by, wife or foolish
I. Notions? *ALC.* By wise, doubtless.
EUPH. It seems then to follow, that he
who promotes the general wellbeing of
Mankind by the proper necessary means,
is truly wise, and acts upon wise grounds.
ALC. It shou'd seem so. *EUPH.* And
is not Folly of an opposite nature to
Wisdom? *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* Might
it not therefore be inferred, that those
Men are foolish who go about to un-
hinge such Principles as have a necessary
connexion with the general good of Man-
kind? *ALC.* Perhaps this might be
granted: but at the same time I must ob-
serve, that it is in my power to deny it.
EUPH. How! you will not surely deny
the Conclusion, when you admit the Pre-
mises. *ALC.* I wou'd fain know upon
what terms we argue: whether in this
progress of Question and Answer, if a
Man makes a slip it be utterly irretrieva-
ble? For if you are on the catch to lay
hold of every advantage, without allow-
ing for surprise or inattention, I must tell
you this is not the way to convince my
Judgment. *EUPH.* O *Alciphron!* I aim
not at Triumph, but at Truth. You
are therefore at full liberty to unravel
all that hath been said, and to recover
or correct any slip you have made. But
then

then you must distinctly point it out: DIAL.
otherwise it will be impossible ever to I.
arrive at any conclusion. ALC. I agree —
with you upon these terms jointly to
proceed in search of Truth, for to that
I am sincerely devoted. In the progress
of our present Inquiry I was, it seems,
guilty of an oversight, in acknowledging
the general happiness of Mankind to be
a greater Good than the particular hap-
piness of one Man. For in fact, the in-
dividual happiness of every Man alone,
constitutes his own entire Good. The
happiness of other Men making no part
of mine, is not with respect to me a
Good: I mean a true natural Good. It
cannot therefore be a reasonable end to
be proposed by me in Truth and Nature,
(for I do not speak of political pretences)
since no wise Man will pursue an end
which doth not concern him. This is
the voice of Nature. Oh Nature! thou
art the fountain, original, and pattern of
all that is good and wise. EUPH. You
wou'd like then to follow Nature, and
propose her as a guide and pattern for
your imitation. ALC. Of all things.
EUPH. Whence do you gather this re-
spect for Nature? ALC. From the ex-
cellency of her Productions. EUPH. In
a Vegetable, for instance, you say there
is

DIAL. is use and excellency, because the several
I. parts of it are so connected and fitted to
each other, as to protect and nourish the
whole, make the individual grow, and
propagate the kind, and because in its
fruits or qualities it is adapted to please
the Sense, or contribute to the benefit of
Man. ALC. Even so. EUPH. In like
manner, do you not infer the excellency of
Animal Bodies from observing the frame
and fitness of their several parts, by
which they mutually conspire to the well-
being of each other as well as of the
whole? Do you not also observe a na-
tural union and consent between Animals
of the same kind, and that even diffe-
rent kinds of Animals have certain qua-
lities and instincts whereby they contri-
bute to the exercise, nourishment, and de-
light of each other? Even the inanimate
unorganized Elements seem to have an ex-
cellence relative to each other. Where
was the excellency of Water if it did not
cause Herbs and Vegetables to spring from
the Earth, and put forth flowers and
fruits? And what wou'd become of the
beauty of the Earth, if it was not warm-
ed by the Sun, moistened by Water, and
fanned by Air? Throughout the whole
System of the visible and natural World,
do you not perceive a mutual connexion
and

and correspondence of parts? And is it DIAL. not from hence that you frame an Idea I. of the perfection, and order, and beauty ~~—~~ of Nature? ALC. All this I grant. EUPH. And have not the Stoicks heretofore said (who were no more Bigots than you are) and did you not your self say, this pattern of Order was worthy the imitation of rational Agents? ALC. I do not deny this to be true. EUPH. Ought we not therefore to infer the same Union, Order, and Regularity in the moral World that we perceive to be in the natural? ALC. We ought. EUPH. Shou'd it not therefore seem to follow that reasonable Creatures were, as the philosophical Emperor † observes, made one for another; and consequently that *Man* ought not to consider himself as an independent Individual, whose happiness is not connected with that of other Men? but rather as the part of a whole, to the common good of which he ought to conspire, and order his ways and Actions suitably, if he wou'd live according to Nature. ALC. Supposing this to be true, what then? EUPH. will it not follow that a wise Man shou'd consider and pursue his private Good, with regard to, and

† M. Antonin. l. 4.

DIAL. in conjunction with, that of other Men?

I. in granting of which, you thought your self guilty of an oversight. Though, indeed, the sympathy of pain and pleasure, and the mutual affections by which Mankind are knit together, have been always allowed a plain proof of this point : And though it was the constant Doctrine of those, who were esteemed the wisest and most thinking Men among the Ancients, as the Platonists, Peripatetics, and Stoicks; to say nothing of Christians, whom you pronounce to be an unthinking prejudiced sort of people. *ALC.* I shall not dispute this point with you. *EUPH.* Since therefore we are so far agreed, shou'd it not seem to follow from the Premises; That the belief of a God, of a future State, and of moral Duties, are the only wise, right, and genuine Principles of Humane Conduct, in case they have a necessary connection with the wellbeing of Mankind? This Conclusion you have been led to by your own concessions and by the analogy of Nature. *ALC.* I have been drawn into it step by step through several Preliminaries, which I cannot well call to mind; but one thing I observe, that you build on the necessary connexion those Principles have with the wellbeing of Mankind: which is a point neither proved

proved nor granted. *LYS.* This I take DIAL.
to be a grand fundamental Prejudice, as I
doubt not, if I had time I cou'd make ap-
pear. But it is now late, and we will, if
you think fit, defer this Subject till to-
morrow. Upon which Motion of *Lysi-*
cles we put an end to our conversation for
that Evening.



E

The



The SECOND DIALOGUE.

- I. *Vulgar error, that Vice is hurtful.*
- II. *The benefit of Drunkenness, Gaming, and Whoring.*
- III. *Prejudice against Vice wearing off.*
- IV. *Its usefulness illustrated in the instances of Callicles and Telesilla.*
- V. *The reasoning of Lysicles in behalf of Vice examined.*
- VI. *Wrong to punish Actions when the Doctrines whence they flow are tolerated.*
- VII. *Hazardous experiment of the Minute Philosophers.*
- VIII. *Their Doctrine of Circulation and Revolution.*
- IX. *Their sense of a Reformation.*
- X. *Riches alone not the public weal.*
- XI. *Authority of Minute Philosophers: their Prejudice against Religion.*
- XII. *Effects of Luxury: Virtue whether notional?*
- XIII. *Pleasure of Sense.*
- XIV. *What sort of pleasure most natural to Man.*
- XV. *Dignity of Humane Nature.*
- XVI. *Pleasure mistaken.*
- XVII. *Amusements, Misery, and Cowardise of Minute Philosophers.*
- XVIII. *Rakes cannot reckon.*
- XIX. *Abilities and Success of Minute Philosophers.*
- XX. *Happy effects of the Minute Philosophy in particular.*

ticular instances. XXI. Their free no- DIAL.
tions about Government. XXII. England II.
the proper soil for Minute Philosophy. 
XXIII. The policy and address of its
Professors. XXIV. Merit of Mi-
nute Philosophers towards the Public.
XXV. Their Notions and Character.
XXVI. Their tendency towards Popery
and Slavery.

I.  EX T Morning, *Alciphron* and *Lysicles* said the Weather was so fine they had a mind to spend the Day abroad, and take a cold Dinner under a Shade in some pleasant part of the Country. Whereupon, after Breakfast, we went down to a Beach about half a mile off; where we walked on the smooth sand, with the Ocean on one hand, and on the other wild broken Rocks, intermixed with shady Trees and springs of Water, till the Sun began to be uneasy. We then withdrew into a hollow Glade, between two Rocks, where we had no sooner seated our selves but *Lysicles* addressing himself to *Euphranor*, said: I am now ready to perform what I undertook last Evening, which was to shew, there is nothing in that necessary Connexion which some Men imagine between those Principles

DIAL. you contend for, and the public Good. I
II. freely own, that if this Question was to
be decided by the authority of Legislators
or Philosophers, it must go against us.
For those Men generally take it for
granted, that Vice is pernicious to the
Public; and that Men cannot be kept
from Vice but by the fear of God, and
the sense of a future State; whence they
are induced to think the belief of such
things necessary to the wellbeing of hu-
mane Kind. This false notion hath pre-
vailed for many ages in the World, and
done an infinite deal of mischief, being
in truth the cause of religious Establish-
ments, and gaining the protection and
encouragement of Laws and Magistrates
to the Clergy and their Superstitions.
Even some of the wisest among the An-
cients, who agreed with our Sect in deny-
ing a Providence and the Immortality of
the Soul, had nevertheless the weakness
to lie under the common prejudice that
Vice was hurtful to Societies of Men.
But *England* hath of late produced great
Philosophers who have undeceived the
world, and proved to a demonstration that
private Vices are public Benefits. This
Discovery was reserved to our times, and
our Sect hath the glory of it. CRI. It
is possible some Men of fine Understand-
ing

ing might in former ages have had a DIAL,
glimpse of this important Truth ; but II.
it may be presumed they lived in ignorant
times and bigotted countries, which were
not ripe for such a discovery. LYS. Men
of narrow capacities and short sight be-
ing able to see no further than one link
in a chain of Consequences, are shocked
at small evils which attend upon Vice.
But those who can enlarge their view,
and look through a long series of events,
may behold Happiness resulting from Vice,
and Good springing out of Evil in a thou-
sand instances. To prove my point I
shall not trouble you with Authorities or
far-fetched Arguments, but bring you to
plain Matter of Fact. Do but take a
view of each particular Vice, and trace
it through its Effects and Consequences,
and then you will clearly perceive the ad-
vantage it brings to the Public.

II. Drunkenness, for instance, is by
your sober Moralists thought a pernici-
ous Vice ; but it is for want of consider-
ing the good effects that flow from it.
For in the first place it increases the
Malt Tax, a principal branch of his Ma-
jesty's Revenue, and thereby promotes the
safety, strength, and glory of the Na-
tion. Secondly, it employs a great num-

DIAL. ber of hands, the Brewer, the Malster,
II. the Ploughman, the dealer in Hops, the
Smith, the Carpenter, the Brasier, the
Joiner, with all other artificers necessary
to supply those enumerated, with their
respective instruments and utensils. All
which advantages are procured from
Drunkenness in the vulgar way, by strong
Beer. This point is so clear it will ad-
mit of no dispute. But while you are
forced to allow thus much, I foresee you
are ready to object against Drunkenness
occasion'd by Wine and Spirits, as ex-
porting wealth into foreign countries.
But you do not reflect on the number of
hands which even this sets on work at
home: The Distillers, the Vintners, the
Merchants, the Sailors, the Shipwrights,
with all those who are employ'd towards
victualling and fitting out Ships, which
upon a nice computation will be found
to include an incredible variety of Trades
and Callings. Then for freighting our
Ships to answer these foreign importa-
tions, all our manufactures throughout
the Kingdom are employ'd, the Spinners,
the Weavers, the Dyers, the Wool-comb-
ers, the Carriers, the Packers. And the
same may be said of many other manu-
factures, as well as the woollen. And
if it be further considered, how many
Men

Men are enriched by all the foremen- DIAL:
tioned ways of trade and business, and the II.
expences of these Men, and their fami- lies, in all the several articles of conve-
nient and fashionable living, whereby all
sorts of trades and callings, not only at
home, but throughout all parts wherever
our commerce reaches, are kept in em-
ployment, you will be amazed at the
wonderfully extended scene of benefits
which arise from the single vice of
Drunkenness, so much run down and
declaimed against by all grave Reformers.
With as much judgment your half-wit-
ted folk are accustomed to censure Ga-
ming. And indeed (such is the ignorance
and folly of Mankind) a Gamester and
a Drunkard are thought no better than
publick nusances, when in truth, they do
each in their way greatly conduce to the
public benefit. If you look only on the
surface and first appearance of things,
you will no doubt think playing at Cards
a very idle and fruitless occupation. But
dive deeper, and you shall perceive this idle
amusement employs the Card-maker, and
he sets the Paper-mills at work, by which
the poor Rag-man is supported; not to
mention the Builders and Workers in wood
and iron that are employ'd in erecting and
furnishing those Mills. Look still deeper,

DIAL. and you shall find that Candles and
II. Chair-hire employ the industrious and the
poor, who by these means come to be re-
lieved by Sharpers and Gentlemen, who
wou'd not give one penny in charity.
But you will say that many Gentlemen
and Ladies are ruined by play, without
considering that what one Man loses a-
nother gets, and that consequently as ma-
ny are made as ruined; money changeth
hands, and in this circulation the life of
business and commerce consists. When
money is spent, it is all one to the Pub-
lic who spends it. Suppose a fool of
quality becomes the dupe of a Man of
mean birth and circumstance, who has
more wit. In this case what harm doth
the Public sustain? Poverty is relieved,
Ingenuity is rewarded, the Money stays
at home, and has a lively circulation,
the ingenious Sharper being enabled to set
up an equipage and spend handsomely,
which cannot be done without employ-
ing a world of people. But you will
perhaps object, that a Man reduced by
play may be put upon desperate courses
hurtful to the Public. Suppose the
worst, and that he turns Highwayman,
such Men have a short life and a mer-
ry. While he lives, he spends, and for
one that he robs makes twenty the bet-
ter

better for his expence. And when his DIAL.
time is come, a poor Family may be re- II.
lieved by fifty or a hundred Pounds set —
upon his Head. A vulgar eye looks on
many a Man as an idle or mischievous
fellow, whom a true Philosopher view-
ing in another light, considers as a Man of
pleasant occupation who diverts himself,
and benefits the Public: And that with
so much ease, that he employs a multi-
tude of Men, and sets an infinite Ma-
chine in motion, without knowing the
good he does, or even intending to do
any; which is peculiar to that Gentle-
man-like way of doing good by Vice. I
was considering Play, and that insensibly
led me to the advantages, which attend
robbing on the high way. Oh the beau-
tiful and never enough admired connec-
tion of Vices! It wou'd take too much
time to shew how they all hang together,
and what an infinite deal of good takes
its rise from every one of them. One
word for a favourite Vice, and I shall
leave you to make out the rest your self,
by applying the same way of reasoning
to all other vices. A poor Girl, who might
not have the spending of half a Crown
a week in what you call an honest way,
no sooner hath the good fortune to be a
kept Mistress, but she employs Milliners,
Laun-

DIAL. Laundresses, Tire-women, Mercers, and
II. a number of other trades to the benefit
~~—~~ of her Country. It wou'd be endless to
trace and pursue every particular Vice
through its consequences and effects, and
shew the vast advantage they all are of to
the Public. The true Springs that actuate
the great Machine of Commerce, and
make a flourishing State have been hi-
therto little understood. Your Moralists
and Divines have for so many ages been
corrupting the genuine Sense of mankind,
and filling their heads with such absurd
principles, that it is in the power of few
Men to contemplate real life with an
unprejudiced Eye. And fewer still have
sufficient Parts and Sagacity to pursue a
long train of consequences, relations and
dependences, which must be done in or-
der to form a just and entire notion of
the public weal. But, as I said before,
our Sect hath produced Men capable of
these discoveries, who have displayed them
in a full light, and made them public for
the benefit of their Country.

III. Oh! Said *Euphranor*, who heard
this discourse with great attention, you
Lysicles are the very Man I wanted, elo-
quent and ingenious, knowing in the
principles of your Sect, and willing to
impart

impart them. Pray tell me, do these DIAL. principles find an easy admission in the II. World? LY S. They do among inge- nious Men and People of fashion, though you will sometimes meet with strong prejudices against them in the middle sort, an effect of ordinary Talents and mean Breeding. EUPH. I shou'd wonder if Men were not shocked at notions of such a surprising nature, so contrary to all Laws, Education, and Religion. LY S. They wou'd be shocked much more if it had not been for the skilful address of our Philosophers, who, considering that most Men are influenced by names rather than things, have introduced a cer- tain polite way of speaking, which lessens much of the abhorrence and prejudice towards Vice. EUPH. Explain me this. LY S. Thus in our Dialect a vicious Man is a Man of pleasure, a Sharper is one that plays the whole game, a Lady is said to have an affair, a Gentleman to be gallant, a Rogue in business to be one that knows the World. By this means we have no such things as Sots, Debauchees, Whores, Rogues, or the like in the *beau monde*, who may enjoy their vices without in- curring disagreeable Appellations. EUPH. Vice then is, it seems, a fine thing with an ugly name. LY S. Be assured it is. EUPH.

DIAL. *EUPH.* It shou'd seem then, that *Plato's*

II. fearing lest youth might be corrupted,
by those Fables which represented the
Gods vicious, was an effect of his weak-
ness and ignorance. *LYS.* It was, take
my word for it. *EUPH.* And yet *Plato*

had kept good Company and lived in a
Court. And *Cicero* who knew the World
well had a profound esteem for him.

CR. I. I tell you, *Euphranor*, that *Plato*
and *Tully* might perhaps make a figure in
Athens or *Rome*: But were they to revive
in our days, they wou'd pass but for un-
derbred Pedants, there being at most
Coffee-houses in *London*, several able Men
who cou'd convince them they knew
nothing in, what they are valued so
much much for, Morals and Politics,
LYS. How many long-headed Men do I
know both in the Court-end and the City
with five times *Plato's* Sense, who care not
one straw what notion their Sons have
of God or Virtue.

IV. *CR. I.* I can illustrate this Doc-
trine of *Lysicles* by examples that will
make you perceive its force. *Cleophon*, a
Minute Philosopher, took strict care of his
Son's Education and entered him betimes
in the principles of his Sect. *Callicles*
(that was his Son's name) being a Youth
of

of parts made a notable progress; insomuch that before he became of age he killed his old covetous Father with vexation, and ruined the Estate he left behind him; or, in other words, made a present of it to the Public, spreading the Dung-hill collected by his Ancestors over the face of the Nation, and making out of one overgrown Estate several pretty fortunes for ingenious Men, who live by the vices of the Great. *Telefilla*, though a Woman of Quality and Spirit, made no figure in the World, till she was instructed by her Husband in the tenets of the Minute Philosophy, which he wisely thought wou'd prevent her giving anything in Charity. From that time she took a turn towards expensive Diversions, particularly deep Play, by which means she soon transferred a considerable share of his fortune to several acute Men skilled in that Mystery, who wanted it more, and circulate it quicker than her Husband wou'd have done, who in return hath got an Heir to his Estate, having never had a Child before. That same *Telefilla*, who was good for nothing as long as she believed her Catechism, now shines in all public places, is a Lady of gallantry and fashion, and has by her

DIAL.
II.

DIAL. extravagant parade in Lace and fine
II. Clothes raised a Spirit of expence in other
Ladies, very much to the public benefit,
though it must be owned to the mortification
of many frugal Husbands. While
Crito related these facts with a grave face,
I cou'd not forbear smiling, which *Lysicles*
observing, superficial minds, said he,
may perhaps find something to ridicule in
these accounts; but all who are Masters
of a just way of thinking must needs see
that those maxims, the benefit whereof is
universal, and the damage only particular
to private Persons or Families, ought to
be encouraged in a wise Commonwealth.
For my part, said *Euphranor*, I confess
my self to be rather dazzled and confounded
than convinced by your reasoning;
which, as you observed your self, taking
in the connection of many distant points
requires great extent of thought to com-
prehend it. I must therefore intreat you
to bear with my defects, suffer me to take
to pieces what is too big to be received at
once; and where I cannot keep pace with
you, permit me to follow you step by
step, as fast as I can. *LYS.* There is
reason in what you say. Every one cannot
suddenly take a long concatenation of
Arguments.

V. EUPH.

V. *EUPH.* Your several Arguments DIAL.

seem to center in this, that vice circulates
money and promotes industry, which cau-
seth a People to flourish: Is it not so?

LYS. It is. *EUPH.* And the reason that
vice produceth this effect is, because it
causeth an extravagant consumption which
is the most beneficial to the Manufac-
turers, their encouragement consisting in a
quick demand and high price. *LYS.* True.
EUPH. Hence you think a Drunkard
most beneficial to the Brewer and the
Vintner, as causing a quick consumption
of Liquor, inasmuch as he drinks more
than other Men. *LYS.* Without doubt.

EUPH. Say, *Lysicles*, who drinks most a
sick Man or a healthy? *LYS.* A healthy.

EUPH. And which is healthiest a sober
Man or a Drunkard? *LYS.* A Sober Man.

EUPH. A Sober Man therefore in health
may drink more than a Drunkard when
he is sick. *LYS.* He may. *EUPH.*

What think you, will a Man consume
more Meat and Drink in a long life or a
short one? *LYS.* In a long. *EUPH.* A

Sober healthy Man, therefore, in a long
life may circulate more Money by eating
and drinking, than a Glutton or Drunkard
in a short one. *LYS.* What then?

EUPH. Why then it shou'd seem, that
he may be more beneficial to the Public
even

DIAL. even in this way of eating and drinking.

II. LYS. I shall never own that temperance

is the way to promote drinking. EUPH.
But you will own that sickness lessens,
and death puts an end to all drinking.

The same Argument will hold, for ought
I can see, with respect to all other vices
that impair Mens health and shorten their
lives. And if we admit this, it will not
be so clear a point that vice hath merit

towards the public. LYS. But admitting
that some Artificers or Traders might
be as well encouraged by the sober Men
as the vicious; what shall we say of those
who subsist altogether by Vice and Va-

nity? EUPH. If such there are, may

they not be otherwise employ'd without
loss to the Public? Tell me, *Lysicles*, is
there any thing in the nature of Vice,
as such that renders it a public blessing,
or is it only the consumption it occa-

sions? LYS. I have already shewn how

it benefits the nation by the consumption

of its Manufactures. EUPH. And you

have granted that a long and healthy life
consumes more than a short and sickly

one; and you will not deny that many
consume more than one. Upon the whole

then compute and say, which is most likely

to promote the industry of his Country-

men, a virtuous married Man with a

healthy

healthy numerous Offspring, and who DIAL:
feeds and cloathes the Orphans in his II.
Neighbourhood, or a fashionable Rake a-
bout Town. I wou'd fain know whether
Money spent innocently, doth not circu-
late as well as that spent upon Vice. And
if so, whether by your own rule it doth
not benefit the Public as much? LYS.
What I have proved, I proved plainly,
and there is no need of more words about
it. EUPH. You seem to me, to have
proved nothing, unless you can make it
out that it is impossible to spend a fortune
innocently. I shou'd think the public
weal of a Nation consists in the number
and good condition of its Inhabitants;
have you any thing to object to this? LYS.
I think not. EUPH. To this end which
would most conduce, the employing Men
in open air and manly exercise, or in
sedentary busines within doors? LYS.
The former I suppose. EUPH. Shou'd
it not seem therefore, that building, gar-
dening, and agriculture would employ Men
more usefully to the Public, than if Tai-
lors, Barbers, Perfumers, Distillers and
such arts were multiplied. LYS. All this
I grant; but it makes against you. For
what moves Men to build and plant but
vanity, and what is vanity but vice?
EUPH. But if a Man shou'd do those

DIAL. things for his convenience or pleasure,
II. and in proportion to his fortune, without
a foolish ostentation or over-rating them
beyond their due value, they would not
then be the effect of vice ; and how do you
know but this may be the case ? C.R.I.
One thing I know that the readiest way
to quicken that sort of industry, and em-
ploy Carpenters, Masons, Smiths, and
all such trades wou'd be to put in practice
the happy hint of a celebrated Minute
Philosopher, who by profound thinking
has discovered, that burning the City of
London wou'd be no such bad action, as
silly prejudiced People might possibly
imagine ; inasmuch as it wou'd produce a
quick circulation of property, transferring
it from the rich to the poor, and employ-
ing a great number of Artificers of all
kinds. This at least cannot be denied that
it hath opened a new way of thinking to
our Incendiaries, of which the Public
hath of late begun to reap the benefit.
EUPH. I cannot sufficiently admire this
ingenious thought.

VI. But methinks it wou'd be dan-
gerous to make it publick. C.R.I. Dangerous
to whom ? EUPH. In the first place to
the publisher. C.R.I. That is a mistake ;
for the notion hath been published and
met

met with due applause, in this most wise DIAL.
and happy age of Free-thinking, Free-
speaking, Free-writing, and Free-a&ting.

II.



EUPH. How! may a Man then publish
and practise such things with impunity?
CRI. To speak the truth, I am not so
clear as to the practic part. An unlucky
accident now and then befalls an ingeni-
ous Man. The Minute Philosopher *Ma-*
girus, being desirous to benefit the Public,
by circulating an Estate possessed by a
near Relation who had not the heart to
spend it, soon convinced himself upon
these principles, that it wou'd be a very
worthy action to dispatch out of the way
such a useless fellow, to whom he was
next heir. But for this laudable attempt,
he had the misfortune to be hanged by an
under-bred Judge and Jury. Could any
thing be more unjust? EUPH. Why
unjust? CRI. Is it not unjust to punish
actions, when the principles from which
they directly follow are tolerated and ap-
plauded by the Public? Can any thing be
more inconsistent than to condemn in
practice what is approved in speculation.
Truth is one and the same, it being im-
possible a thing should be practically
wrong and speculatively right. Thus
much is certain, *Magirus* was perfect
Master of all this Theory, and argued

DIAL. most acutely about it with a Friend of
II. mine, a little before he did the fact for
— which he died. LYS. The best on't is
the World every day grows wiser. CRI.
You mistake, *Euphranor*, if you think the
Minute Philosophers idle Theorists; They
are Men of practical views. EUPH. As
much as I love Liberty, I shou'd be
afraid to live among such People; it
would be, as *Seneca* somewhere expresseth
it, *in libertate bellis ac tyrannis sæviore.*
LYS. What do you mean by quoting
Plato and *Seneca*? Can you imagine a Free-
thinker is to be influenced by the Au-
thority of such old fashioned Writers?
EUPH. You, *Lysicles*, and your Friend
have often quoted to me ingenious Mo-
derns, profound fine Gentlemen, with
new names of Authors in the Minute
Philosophy, to whose merits I am a per-
fect stranger. Suffer me in my turn to
cite such Authorities as I know, and
have passed for many ages upon the
World.

VII. But, Authority apart, what do
you say to Experience? My Observation
can reach as far as a private Family; and
some wise Men have thought, a Family
may be considered as a small Kingdom,
or a Kingdom as a great Family. Do you
admit

admit this to be true? *LYS.* If I say DIAL: yes, you'll make an inference, and if I II. say no, you'll demand a reason. The best way is to say nothing at all. There is, I see, no end of answering. *EUPH.* If you give up the point you undertook to prove, there is an end at once: But if you hope to convince me you must answer my questions, and allow me the liberty to argue and infer. *LYS.* Well, suppose I admit that a Kingdom may be considered as a great Family. *EUPH.* I shall ask you then, whether ever you knew private Families thrive by those vices, you think so beneficial to the Publick? *LYS.* Suppose I have not. *EUPH.* Might not a Man therefore by a parity of reason suspect their being of that benefit to the Public? *LYS.* Fear not; the next age will thrive and flourish. *EUPH.* Pray tell me, *Lyficles*; suppose you saw a fruit of a new untried kind; would you recommend it to your own Family to make a full meal of? *LYS.* I would not. *EUPH.* Why then would you try upon your own Country these maxims which were never admitted in any other? *LYS.* The experiment must begin somewhere; and we are resolved our own Country shall have the honour and advantage of it. *EUPH.* O *Lyficles*, hath not old *England* subsisted

DIAL. subsisted for many ages without the help
II. of your notions? LY'S. She has. EUPH.
— And made some figure? LY'S. I grant it.
EUPH. Why then shou'd you make her
run the risque of a new experiment,
when it is certain she may do without it?
LY'S. But we would make her do better.
We wou'd produce a change in her that
never was seen in any Nation. EUPH.
Sallust observes, that a little before the
downfall of the *Roman Empire*, avarice
(the effect of Luxury) had erased the good
old principles of probity and justice, had
produced a contempt for Religion, and
made every thing venal, while ambition
bred dissimulation, and caused Men to
unite in clubs and parties, not from ho-
nourable motives, but narrow and inter-
ested views. The same Historian ob-
serves of that great Free-thinker *Catiline*,
that he made it his business to insinuate
himself into the acquaintance of young
Men, whose minds unimproved by years
and experience were more easily seduced.
I know not how it happens, but these
passages have occurred to my Thoughts
more than once during this Conversation.
LY'S. *Sallust* was a sententious Pedant.
EUPH. But consult any Historian, look
into any Writer. See, for instance, what
Xenophon and *Livy* say of *Sparta* and
Rome,

Rome, and then tell me if Vice be not the DIAL.
likeliest way to ruin and enslave a People. II.

LYS. When a point is clear by its own evidence, I never think it worth while to consult old Authors about it. *CRI.* It requires much thought and delicate observation to go to the bottom of things. But one who hath come at Truth with difficulty can impart it with ease. I will therefore, *Euphranor*, explain to you in three words (what none of your old Writers ever dreamt of) the true cause of ruin to those States. You must know that Vice and Vertue, being opposite and contradictory Principles, both working at once in a state, will produce contrary effects, which intestine discord must needs tend to the dissolution and ruin of the whole. But it is the design of our Minute Philosophers, by making Men wicked upon principle, a thing unknown to the Ancients, so to weaken and destroy the force of vertue, that its effects shall not be felt in the Public. In which case Vice being uncontrolled without let or impediment of principle, pure and genuine without allay of vertue, the Nation must doubtless be very flourishing and triumphant. *EUPH.* Truly, a noble Scheme! *CRI.* And in a fair way to take effect. For our young proficients in the Minute

DIAL. Philosophy, having, by a rare felicity of Education, no tincture of bigotry or prejudice, do far outgo the old standers and professors of the Sect; who, though Men of admirable parts, yet, having had the misfortune to be imbued in their Childhood with some religious Notions, cou'd never after get intirely rid of them; but still retain some small grains of conscience and superstition, which are a check upon the noblest Genius. In proof of this, I remember that the famous Minute Philosopher old *Demodicus* came one day, from conversation upon busines with *Timander*, a young Gentleman of the same Sect, full of astonishment. I am surprised, said he, to see so young, and withal so compleat a Villain, and, such was the force of prejudice, spoke of *Timander* with abhorrence, not considering that he was only the more egregious and profound Philosopher of the two.

VIII. EUPH. Though much may be hoped from the unprejudiced education of young Gentlemen, yet it seems we are not to expect a settled and intire Happiness, before Vice reigns pure and unmixed; till then, much is to be feared from the dangerous struggle between Vice and Virtue,

Virtue, which may perchance overturn DIAL:
and dissolve this Government, as it hath II.
done others. *LYS.* No matter for that, ~~—~~
if a better comes in its place. We have
cleared the land of all Prejudices towards
Government or Constitution, and made
them fly like other Phantasms before the
light of Reason and good Sense. Men
who think deeply cannot see any reason,
why Power shou'd not change hands as
well as Property; or why the fashion of
a Government shou'd not be changed as
easily as that of a Garment. The per-
petual circulating and revolving of Wealth
and Power, no matter through what or
whose hands, is that which keeps up Life
and Spirit in a State. Those who are
even slightly read in our Philosophy,
know that of all Prejudices the silliest is
an attachment to forms. *CRI.* To say no
more upon so clear a point, the over-
turning a Government may be justified
upon the same Principles as the burning
a Town, wou'd produce parallel effects,
and equally contribute to the public
good. In both cases, the natural springs
of Action are forcibly exerted: and in
this general Industry what one loses ano-
ther gets, a quick circulation of Wealth
and Power making the Sum Total to flou-
rish. *EUPH.* And do the Minute Phi-
losophers

DIAL. Iosophers publish these things to the
II. World? LYS. It must be confessed our
Writers proceed in Politics with greater
caution than they think necessary with
regard to Religion. CRI. But those
things plainly follow from their Principles,
and are to be admitted for the genuine
Doctrine of the Sect, expressed perhaps
with more freedom and perspicuity, than
might be thought prudent by those who
wou'd manage the Public, or not offend
weak brethren. EUPH. And pray, is
there not need of caution, a Rebel, or
Incendiary being characters that many
Men have a prejudice against? LYS. Weak
People of all ranks have a world of absurd
Prejudices. EUPH. But the better sort,
such as Statesmen and Legislators; do you
think they have not the same Indisposi-
tion towards admitting your Principles?
LYS. Perhaps they may; but the reason
is plain. CRI. This puts me in mind
of that ingenious Philosopher, the Game-
ster *Glaucus*, who used to say, that States-
men and Lawgivers may keep a stir about
right and wrong, just and unjust, but
that, in truth, Property of every kind had
so often passed from the right owners by
fraud and violence, that it was now to
be considered as lying on the common,
and with equal right belonged to every
one

one that cou'd seize it. *EUPH.* What *DIAL.*
are we to think then of Laws and Regu-
lations relating to Right and Wrong,
Crimes and Duties? *LYS.* They serve to
bind weak minds, and keep the Vulgar in
awe: But no sooner doth a true Genius
arise, but he breaks his way to Great-
ness through all the trammels of Duty,
Conscience, Religion, Law; to all which
he sheweth himself infinitely superior.

IX. *EUPH.* You are, it seems, for
bringing about a thorough Reformation.
LYS. As to what is commonly called
the Reformation, I cou'd never see how
or wherein the World was the better for
it. It is much the same as Popery, with
this difference, that it is the more prude-
like and disagreeable thing of the two.
A noted Writer of ours makes it too
great a compliment, when he computes
the benefit of Hooped-petticoats to be
nearly equal to that of the Reformation.
Thorough Reformation is thorough Li-
berty. Leave Nature at full freedom to
work her own way, and all will be well.
This is what we aim at, and nothing
short of this can come up to our Prin-
ciples. *Crito*, who is a zealous Protestant,
hearing these words, cou'd not refrain.

The

DIAL. The worst effect of the Reformation,
II. said he, was the rescuing wicked Men
from a darkness which kept them in awe. This, as it hath proved, was holding out Light to Robbers and Murderers. Light in it self is good, and the same Light which shews a Man the folly of Superstition, might shew him the truth of Religion, and the madness of Atheism. But to make use of Light, only to see the evils on one side, and never to see, but to run blindly upon the worse extreme, this is to make the best of things produce Evil, in the same sense that you prove the worst of things to produce Good, to wit, accidentally or indirectly: and by the same method of arguing, you may prove that even Diseases are useful: but whatever benefit seems to accrue to the Public, either from disease of Mind or Body, is not their genuine offspring, and may be obtained without them. *Lysicles* was a little disconcerted by the affirmative air of *Crito*; but after a short pause replied briskly, That to contemplate the public good was not every one's talent. True, said *Euphranor*, I question whether every one can frame a notion of the public good, much less judge of the means to promote it.

X. But

X. But you, *Lysicles*, who are master DIAL. of this subject, will be pleased to inform II. me, whether the public good of a Nation doth not imply the particular good of its Individuals? *LYS.* It doth. *EUPH.* And doth not the good or happiness of a Man consist, in having both Soul and Body sound and in good condition, enjoying those things which their respective Natures require, and free from those things which are odious or hurtful to them. *LYS.* I do not deny all this to be true. *EUPH.* Now it shou'd seem worth while to consider, whether the regular decent life of a virtuous Man may not as much conduce to this end, as the mad fallies of Intemperance and Debauchery. *LYS.* I will acknowledge that a Nation may meerly subsist, or be kept alive, but it is impossible it shou'd flourish without the aid of Vice. To produce a quick circulation of traffick and wealth in a State, there must be exorbitant and irregular motions in the Appetites and Passions. *EUPH.* The more people a Nation contains, and the happier those people are, the more that Nation may be said to flourish. I think we are agreed in this point. *LYS.* We are. *EUPH.* You allow then that Riches are not an ultimate

DIAL. mate end, but shou'd only be considered
II. as the means to procure Happiness.
~~—~~ LYS. I do. EUPH. It seems, that means
cannot be of use without our knowing the
end, and how to apply them to it. LYS. It
seems so. EUPH. Will it not follow,
that in order to make a Nation flourish,
it is not sufficient to make it wealthy,
without knowing the true end and happi-
ness of Mankind, and how to apply
wealth towards attaining that end? In
proportion as these points are known and
practised, I think the Nation shou'd
be likely to flourish. But for a people
who neither know nor practise them,
to gain riches, seems to me the same ad-
vantage that it wou'd be for a sick Man
to come at plenty of meat and drink,
which he cou'd not use but to his hurt.
LYS. This is meer sophistry; it is ar-
guing without persuading. Look into
common Life; examine the pursuits of
Men; have a due respect for the con-
sent of the World; and you will soon
be convinced, that Riches alone are suf-
ficient to make a Nation flourishing and
happy. Give them Riches and they will
make themselves happy, without that po-
litical Invention, that Trick of Statesmen
and Philosophers, called Virtue.

XI. EUPH.

XI. EUPH. Virtue then, in your account, is a Trick of Statesmen. LYS. It

DIAL.
II.

is. EUPH. Why then do your sagacious

Sect betray and divulge that Trick or Secret of State, which wise Men have judged necessary for the good Government of the World? *Lysicles* hesitating, *Crito* made answer, That he presumed it was because their Sect, being wiser than all other wise Men, disdained to see the World governed by wrong Maxims, and wou'd set all things on a right bottom.

EUPH. Thus much is certain. If we look into all institutions of Government, and the political Writings of such as have heretofore passed for wise Men, we shall find a great regard for Virtue. LYS. You shall find a strong tincture of Prejudice: But, as I said before, consult the Multitude if you wou'd find Nature and Truth.

EUPH. But among Country Gentlemen, and Farmers, and the better sort of Tradesmen, is not Virtue a reputable thing? LYS. You pick up Authorities among Men of low life and vile education.

EUPH. Perhaps we ought to pay a decent respect to the Authority of Minute Philosophers. LYS. And I wou'd fain know whose Authority shou'd be more considered, than that of those Gentlemen who are alone above Prejudice,
and

DIAL. and think for themselves. EUPH. How
II. doth it appear that you are the only un-
~~prejudiced~~ prejudiced part of Mankind? May not
a Minute Philosopher, as well as another
Man, be prejudiced in favour of the
leaders of his Sect? May not an athe-
istical Education prejudice towards A-
theism? What shou'd hinder a Man's
being prejudiced against Religion, as well
as for it? Or can you assign any rea-
son why an attachment to Pleasure, In-
terest, Vice, or Vanity, may not be sup-
posed to prejudice Men against Virtue?
LYS. This is pleasant? What! Suppose
those very Men influenced by Prejudice,
who are always disputing against it,
whose constant aim it is to detect and
demolish Prejudices of all kinds! Ex-
cept their own, replied *Crito*, for you
must pardon me, if I cannot help thinking
they have some small Prejudice, though
not in favour of Virtue.

XII. I observe, *Lysicles*, that you al-
lowed to *Euphranor*, the greater number
of happy People are in a State, the more
that State may be said to flourish; it
follows therefore, That such methods as
multiply Inhabitants are good, and such
as diminish them are bad for the Pub-
lic. And one wou'd think no body need
be

be told, that the strength of a State DIAL.
consists more in the number and sort of II.
People, than in any thing else. But in ~~the~~
proportion as Vice and Luxury, those
public blessings encouraged by this Mi-
nute Philosophy, prevail among us, few-
er are disposed to marry, too many be-
ing diverted by Pleasure, disabled by Di-
sease, or frightned by Expence. Nor
doth Vice only thin a Nation, but also
debafeth it by a puny degenerate Race.
I might add, that it is ruinous to our
Manufactures, both as it makes labour
dear, and thereby enables our more fru-
gal Neighbours to undersell us; and also
as it diverts the lower sort of People
from honest Callings to wicked Projects.
If these and such considerations were ta-
ken into the account, I believe it wou'd
be evident to any Man in his senses, that
the imaginary benefits of Vice bear no
proportion to the solid real woes that
attend it. *Lysicles*, upon this, shook his
head, and smiled at *Crito*, without vouch-
safing any other answer. After which,
addressing himself to *Euphranor*, There
cannot, said he, be a stronger instance of
Prejudice, than that a Man shou'd at
this time of day preserve a reverence for that
idol, Virtue, a thing so effectually exposed
and exploded by the most knowing Men of
H the

DIAL. the age, who have shewn, that a Man
II. is a meer engine, play'd upon and driven
 about by sensible objects; and that moral
Virtue is only a Name, a Notion, a Chi-
mæra, an Enthusiasm, or at best a Fa-
shion, uncertain and changeable, like all
other Fashions. EUPH. What do you
think, *Lysicles*, of Health; doth it depend
on Fancy and Caprice, or is it something
real in the bodily composition of a Man?
LYS. Health is something real, which
results from the right Constitution and
Temperature of the Organs and the Fluids
circulating through them. EUPH. This
you say is health of Body. LYS. It is.
EUPH. And may we not suppose an
healthy constitution of Soul, when the
Notions are right, the Judgments true, the
Will regular, the Passions and Appetites
directed to their proper objects, and con-
fined within due bounds? This, in re-
gard to the Soul, seems what Health is to
the Body. And the Man whose mind
is so constituted, is he not properly cal-
led virtuous? And to produce this
healthy disposition in the minds of his
Countrymen, shou'd not every good Man
employ his endeavours? If these things
have any appearance of Truth, as to me
they seem to have, it will not then be
so clear a point that Virtue is a meer
whim

whim or fashion, as you are pleased to DIAL.
represent it: I must own something un-
expectedly, after what had been discour-
sed in last Evening's Conference, which
if you wou'd call to mind, it might per-
haps save both of us some trouble.

II.

LYS. Wou'd you know the truth, *Euphranor*? I must own I have quite forgot
all your discourse about Virtue, Duty,
and all such Points, which, being of an
airy notional nature, are apt to vanish,
and leave no trace on a mind accustom-
ed only to receive Impression from Re-
alities.

XIII. Having heard these words, *Euphranor* looked at *Crito* and me, and said
smiling, I have mistaken my part; it was
mine to learn, and his to instruct. Then
addressing himself to *Lysicles*, Deal
faithfully, said he, and let me know
whether the publick Benefit of Vice be
in truth that which makes you plead for
it? *LYS.* I love to speak frankly what
I think. Know then, that Private Inter-
est is the first and principal considera-
tion with Philosophers of our Sect. Now
of all Interests Pleasure is that which
hath the strongest charms, and no Plea-
sures like those which are heightened and
enlivened by licence. Herein consists the

H 2

peculiar

DIAL. peculiar excellency of our Principles, that
II. they shew People how to serve their
Country by diverting themselves, causing
the two streams of public Spirit and Self-
love to unite and run in the same chan-
nel. I have told you already, that I ad-
mit a Nation might subsist by the rules
of Virtue. But give me leave to say,
it will barely subsist, in a dull joyless
insipid state, whereas the sprightly ex-
cesses of Vice inspire Men with joy: And
where Particulars rejoice, the Public,
which is made up of Particulars, must
do so too; that is, the Public must be
happy. This I take to be an irrefraga-
ble argument. But to give you its full
force, and make it as plain as possible,
I will trace things from their original.
Happiness is the end to which created
beings naturally tend, but we find that
all Animals, whether Men or Brutes, do
naturally and principally pursue real Plea-
sure of Sense, which is therefore to be
thought their supreme Good, their true
End and Happiness. It is for this Men
live, and whoever understands Life must
allow that Man to enjoy the top and
flower of it, who hath a quick sense of
Pleasure, and withal Spirit, Skill, and
Fortune sufficient to gratify every appe-
tite and every taste. Niggards and Fools
will

will envy or traduce such a one because they cannot equal him. Hence, all that sober trifling in disparagement of what every one wou'd be master of if he cou'd, a full freedom and unlimited scope of Pleasure. *EUPH.* Let me see whether I understand you. Pleasure of Sense, you say, is the chief Pleasure. *LYS.* I do. *EUPH.* And this wou'd be cramp't and diminished by Virtue. *LYS.* It wou'd. *EUPH.* Tell me, *Lysicles,* is Pleasure then at the height when the Appetites are satisfied? *LYS.* There is then only an Indolence, the lively sense of Pleasure being past. *EUPH.* It shou'd seem therefore, that the appetites must be always craving to preserve Pleasure alive. *LYS.* That is our sense of the matter. *EUPH.* The Greek Philosopher therefore was in the right, who considered the body of a Man of pleasure as a leaky Vessel, always filling and never full. *LYS.* You may divert your self with Allegories, if you please. But all the while ours is literally the true taste of Nature. Look throughout the Universe, and you shall find Birds and Fishes, Beasts and Insects, all kinds of Animals, with which the Creation swarms, constantly engaged by instinct in the pur-

DIAL. suit of sensible Pleasure. And shall Man
II. alone be the grave fool who thwarts, and
crosses, and subdues his appetites, while
his fellow-creatures do all most joyfully
and freely indulge them? EUPH. How!
Lysicles! I thought that being governed
by the Senses, Appetites, and Passions,
was the most grievous Slavery; and that
the proper busines of Free-thinkers, or
Philosophers, had been to set Men free
from the power of Ambition, Avarice,
and Sensuality. LY.S. You mistake
the point. We make Men relish the
World, attentive to their Interests, lively
and luxurious in their Pleasures,
without fear or restraint either from
God or Man. We despise those preaching
Writers, who used to disturb or
cramp the pleasures and amusements of
Human Life. We hold, that a wise Man
who meddles with business, doth it alto-
gether for his interest, and refers his in-
terest to his pleasure. With us it is a
maxim, that a Man shou'd seize the mo-
ments as they fly. Without Love, and
Wine, and Play, and late hours, we hold
Life not to be worth living. I grant,
indeed, that there is something gross and
ill-bred in the vices of mean Men, which
the genteel Philosopher abhors. CRI. But
to cheat, whore, betray, get drunk, do all
these

these things decently, this is true wisdom, DIAL.
and elegance of taste. II.

XIV. *EUPH.* To me, who have been us'd to another way of thinking, this new Philosophy seems difficult to digest. I must therefore beg leave to examine its Principles, with the same freedom that you do those of other Sects. *LYS.* Agreed. *EUPH.* You say, if I mistake not, that a wise Man pursues only his private interest, and that this consists in sensual pleasure, for proof whereof you appeal to Nature. Is not this what you advance? *LYS.* It is. *EUPH.* You conclude therefore, that as other Animals are guided by natural instinct, Man too ought to follow the dictates of sense and appetite. *LYS.* I do. *EUPH.* But in this, do you not argue as if Man had only sense and appetite for his guides, on which supposition there might be truth in what you say? But what if he hath intellect, reason, a higher instinct and a nobler life? If this be the case, and you being Man, live like a Brute, is it not the way to be defrauded of your true happiness? to be mortified and disappointed? Consider most sorts of Brutes; you shall perhaps find them have a greater share of sensual happiness than Man. *LYS.* To

DIAL. our sorrow we do. This hath made several gentlemen of our Sect envy Brutes, and lament the lot of Humane Kind.

II. *CRI.* It was a consideration of this sort which inspired *Erotylus*, with the laudable ambition of wishing himself a snail, upon hearing of certain particularities discovered in that animal by a modern Virtuoso. *EUPH.* Tell me, *Lyficles*, if you had an inexhaustible fund of gold and silver, shou'd you envy another for having a little more copper than you? *LYS.* I shou'd not. *EUPH.* Are not Reason, Imagination, and Sense, faculties differing in kind, and in rank higher one than another.

LYS. I do not deny it. *EUPH.* Their acts therefore differ in kind. *LYS.* They

do. *EUPH.* Consequently the pleasures perfective of those acts are also different.

LYS. They are. *EUPH.* You admit therefore three sorts of pleasure; pleasure of Reason, pleasure of imagination, and pleasure of Sense. *LYS.* I do.

EUPH. And, as it is reasonable to think, the operation of the highest and noblest faculty to be attended with the highest pleasure, may we not suppose the two former to be as gold or silver, and the latter only as copper? Whence it shou'd seem to follow, that Man need not envy or imitate a Brute. *LYS.* And nevertheless

vertheleſſ there are very ingenious Men DIAL.
who do. And ſurely every one may be II.
allowed to know what he wants, and
wherein his true happiness conſists.

EUPH. Is it not plain that different
Animals have different pleasures? Take
a Hog from his ditch or dunghil, lay
him on a rich bed, treat him with sweat-
meats, and music, and perfumes. All
these things will be no entertainment to
him. Do not a Bird, a Beast, a Fish,
amuse themſelves in various manners, in-
ſomuch that what is pleafing to one may
be death to another? Is it ever ſeen that
one of these Animals quits its own ele-
ment or way of living, to adopt that of
another? And ſhall Man quit his own
Nature to imitate a Brute? LY'S. But
Sense is not only natural to Brutes; is it
not alſo natural to Man? EUPH. It is,
but with this diſference, it maketh the
Whole of a Brute, but is the lowest part
or faculty of a Humane Soul. The na-
ture of any thing is peculiarily that which
doth diſtinguiſh it from other things, not
what it hath in common with them. Do
you allow this to be true? LY'S. I do.
EUPH. And is not Reason that which
makes the principal diſference between
Man and other Animals? LY'S. It is.
EUPH. Reason therefore being the prin-
cipal

DIAL. cipal part of our Nature, whatever is
II. most reasonable shou'd seem most natural
to Man. Must we not therefore think
rational Pleasures more agreeable to Hu-
mane Kind, than those of Sense? Man
and Beast having different Natures, seem
to have different Faculties, different En-
joyments, and different sorts of Happiness.
You can easily conceive, that the sort of
Life which makes the happiness of a Mole
or a Bat, wou'd be a very wretched one
for an Eagle. And may you not as well
conceive that the happiness of a Brute
can never constitute the true happiness
of a Man? A Beast, without Reflection
or Remorse, without Foresight or Appre-
tite of Immortality, without notion of
Vice or Virtue, or Order, or Reason, or
Knowledge! What motive, what grounds
can there be for bringing down Man, in
whom are all these things, to a level with
such a creature? What merit, what am-
bition in the Minute Philosopher to make
such an Animal a guide or rule for Humane
Life?

XV. LYS. It is strange, *Euphranor*,
that one who admits freedom of thought
as you do, shou'd yet be such a slave to
prejudice. You still talk of order and
virtue, as of real things, as if our Phi-
losophers

Iosophers had never demonstrated, that DIAL,
they have no foundation in Nature, and II.
are only the effects of Education. I know,
said *Crito*, how the Minute Philosophers
are accustomed to demonstrate this point.
They consider the animal nature of Man,
or Man so far forth as he is animal; and
it must be owned that considered in that
light, he hath no sense of Duty, no notion
of Virtue. He therefore, who shou'd look
for Virtue among meer animals, or Hu-
mane Kind as such, wou'd look in the
wrong place. But that Philosopher who
is attentive only to the animal part of his
Being, and raiseth his Theorys from the
very dregs of our Species, might probably
upon second thoughts find himself mis-
taken. Look you, *Crito*, said *Lyficles*,
my argument is with *Euphranor* to whom
addressing his discourse; I observe, said
he, that you stand much upon the dig-
nity of Humane Nature. This thing of
dignity is an old worn-out notion, which
depends on other notions old and stale, and
worn-out, such as an immaterial Spirit,
and a Ray derived from the Divinity. But
in these days Men of Sense make a jest
of all this Grandeur and Dignity; and
many there are wou'd gladly exchange
their share of it for the repose and freedom,
and sensuality of a Brute. But compari-
sons

DIAL. sons are odious : waving therefore all inquiry concerning the respective excellencies of Man and Beast, and whether it is beneath a Man to follow or imitate Brute Animals, in judging of the chief good and conduct of Life and Manners, I shall be content to appeal to the Authority of Men themselves, for the truth of my notions. Do but look abroad into the World, and ask the common run of Men, whether pleasure of Sense be not the only true, solid, substantial good of their kind? *EUPH.* But might not the same vulgar sort of Men prefer a piece of Sign-post Painting to one of *Raphael's*, or a *Grubstreet* Ballad to an Ode of *Horace*? Is there not a real difference between good and bad Writing? *LYS.* There is. *EUPH.* And yet you will allow there must be a maturity and improvement of understanding to discern this difference, which doth not make it therefore less real. *LYS.* I will. *EUPH.* In the same manner what shou'd hinder, but there may be in nature a true difference between Vice and Virtue, although it require some degree of reflexion and judgment to observe it? In order to know whether a thing be agreeable to the rational nature of Man, it seems one shou'd rather observe and consult those who have most employ'd or improved

proved their reason. *LYS.* Well, I shall *DIAL.*
not insist on consulting the common herd *II.*
of mankind. From the ignorant and gross
Vulgar, I might my self appeal in many
cases to Men of rank and fashion.
EUPH. They are a sort of Men I have
not the honour to know much of by my
own Observation. But I remember a re-
mark of *Aristotle*, who was himself a
Courtier and knew them well. ‘Virtue,
‘ faith he, * and good Sense are not the
‘ property of high Birth or a great Estate.
‘ Nor if they who possess these advan-
‘ tages, wanting a taste for rational plea-
‘ sures, betake themselves to those of
‘ Sense; ought we therefore to esteem
‘ them eligible, any more than we shou’d
‘ the toys and pastimes of Children, be-
‘ cause they seem so to them?’ And in-
deed one may be allowed to question,
whether the truest estimate of things was
to be expected from a mind intoxicated
with Luxury, and dazzled with the splen-
dor of high living.

*Cum stupet insanis acies fulgoribus, & cum
Acclinis falsis animus meliora recusat.* Hor.

Crito upon this observed, that he knew an
English Nobleman who in the prime of

* Ethic. ad Nicom. l. 10. c. 6.

DIAL. Life professeth a liberal art, and is the
II. first Man of his profession in the World;
— and that he was very sure, he had more
pleasure from the exercise of that elegant
art, than from any sensual enjoyment
within the power of one of the largest
fortunes, and most bountiful Spirits in
Great Britain.

XVI. *LYS.* But why need we have
recourse to the judgment of other Men in
so plain a case? I appeal to your own
breast, consult that, and then say if sen-
sible pleasure be not the chief good
of Man. *EUPH.* I, for my part, have
often thought those pleasures which
are highest in the esteem of sensualists, so
far from being the chiefest good, that it
seemed doubtful upon the whole, whether
they were any good at all, any more than
the meer removal of pain. Are not our
wants and appetites uneasy? *LYS.* They
are. *EUPH.* Doth not sensual pleasure
consist in satisfying them? *LYS.* It doth.
EUPH. But the cravings are tedious, the
satisfaction momentary. Is it not so? *LYS.*
It is, but what then? *EUPH.* Why
then it shou'd seem that sensual pleasure
is but a short deliverance from long pain.
A long avenue of uneasiness leads to a
point of pleasure, which ends in disgust
or

or remorse. *CRI.* And he who pursues *DIAL.*
this *ignis fatuus* imagines himself a Phi- *II.*
losopher and Free-thinker. *LYS.* Pedants
are governed by words and notions,
while the wiser Men of pleasure follow
Fact, Nature, and Sense. *CRI.* But
what if notional pleasures should in fact
prove the most real and lasting? Pure
pleasures of Reason and Imagination nei-
ther hurt the health, nor waste the for-
tune, nor gall the conscience. By them
the mind is long entertained without
loathing or satiety. On the other hand a
notion (which with you it seems passeth
for nothing) often embitters the most
lively sensual pleasures, which at bottom
will be found also to depend upon notion
more than perhaps you imagine, it being
a vulgar remark, that those things are more
enjoyed by hope and foretaste of the Soul
than by possession. Thus much is yielded,
that the actual enjoyment is very short,
and the alternative of Appetite and Dis-
gust long as well as uneasy. So that, upon
the whole, it should seem those Gentlemen,
who are called Men of pleasure from their
eager pursuit of it, do in reality with
great expence of fortune, ease, and health
purchase pain. *LYS.* You may spin out
plausible Arguments, but will after all
find it a difficult matter to convince me,
that

DIAL. that so many ingenious Men shou'd not be
II. able to distinguish between things so di-
rectly opposite as pain and pleasure. How
is it possible to account for this? C.R.I.
I believe a reason may be assigned for it,
but to Men of pleasure no truth is so pa-
latable as a fable. Jove once upon a time
having ordered, that pleasure and pain
shou'd be mixed in equal proportions in
every dose of Humane Life, upon a com-
plaint, that some Men endeavoured to se-
parate what he had joined, and taking
more than their share of the sweet, wou'd
leave all the sour for others, commanded
Mercury to put a stop to this evil, by
fixing on each Delinquent a pair of invi-
sible Spectacles, which shou'd change the
appearance of things, making pain look
like pleasure, and pleasure like pain, la-
bour like recreation, and recreation like
labour. From that time the Men of
pleasure are eternally mistaking and re-
penting. L.Y.S. If your Doctrine takes
place I wou'd fain know what can be the
advantage of a great fortune, which all
mankind so eagerly pursue? C.R.I. It is a
common saying with *Eucrates*, That *a great fortune is an edged tool*, which a hun-
dred may come at, for one who knows
how to use it, so much easier is the art
of getting than that of spending. What
its

its advantage is I will not say, but I will DIAL^d
venture to declare what it is not. I am II.
sure that where abundance excludes want,
and enjoyment prevents appetite, there is
not the quickest sense of those pleasures
we have been speaking of, in which the
Footman hath often a greater share than
his Lord, who cannot enlarge his Stomach
in proportion to his Estate!

XVII. Reasonable and well-educated
Men of all Ranks have, I believe, pretty
much the same amusements, notwithstanding
the difference of their fortunes :
But those who are particularly distin-
guished as Men of pleasure seem to possess
it in a very small degree. EUPH. I
have heard that among Persons of that
character, a game of Cards is esteemed a
chief diversion. LYSS. Without Cards
there cou'd be no living for People of
fashion. It is the most delightful way of
passing an Evening when Gentlemen and
Ladies are got together; who wou'd other-
wise be at a loss what to say or do with
themselves. But a pack of Cards is so
engaging, that it doth not only employ
them when they are met, but serves to
draw them together. Quadrille gives them
pleasure in prospect during the dull hours
of the day; they reflect on it with delight,

DIAL. and it furnishes discourse when it is over.

II. C.R.I. One wou'd be apt to suspect these

People of condition pass their time but heavily, and are but little the better for their fortunes, whose chief amusement is a thing in the power of every Porter or Footman, who is as well qualified to receive pleasure from Cards as a Peer. I can easily conceive that when People of a certain turn are got together, they shou'd prefer doing any thing to the *ennui* of their own conversation; but it is not easy to conceive there is any great pleasure in this. What a Card-table can afford requires neither parts nor fortune to judge of.

LYS. Play is a serious amusement that comes to the relief of a Man of pleasure, after the more lively and affecting enjoyments of Sense. It kills time beyond any thing, and is a most admirable Anodyne to divert or prevent thought, which might otherwise prey upon the mind. C.R.I. I can easily comprehend, that no Man upon Earth ought to prize Anodynes for the Spleen, more than a Man of fashion and pleasure. An ancient Sage speaking of one of that character, faith he is made wretched by disappointments and appetites, *λυπεῖται αποτυγχάνων καὶ επιθυμῶν*. And if this was true of the Greeks who lived in the Sun, and had so much Spirit,

I am apt to think it is still more so of DIAL.
our modern *English*. Something there is II.
in our climate and complexion, that makes
idleness no where so much its own pu-
nishment as in *England*, where an unedu-
cated fine Gentleman pays for his mo-
mentary pleasures, with long and cruel
intervals of Spleen; for relief of which
he is driven into sensual excesses, that
produce a proportionable depression of
Spirits, which, as it createth a greater
want of pleasures, so it lessens the ability
to enjoy them. There is a cast of Thought
in the Complexion of an *Englishman*,
which renders him the most unsuccessful
Rake in the World. He is (as Aristotle
expresseth it) at variance with himself.
He is neither Brute enough to enjoy his
appetites, nor Man enough to govern
them. He knows and feels that what he
pursues is not his true good, his reflexion
serving only to shew him that misery
which his habitual sloth and indolence
will not suffer him to remedy. At length
being grown odious to himself, and ab-
horring his own Company, he runs into
every idle Assembly, not from the hopes
of pleasure, but meerly to respite the
pain of his own mind. Listless and
uneasy at the present, he hath no de-
light in reflecting on what is past, or in

DIAL. the prospect of anything to come. This
II. Man of pleasure, when after a wretched
Scene of vanity and woe his animal na-
ture is worn to the Stumps, wishes and
dreads Death by turns, and is sick of
living, without having ever tried or known
the true life of Man. *EUPH.* It is
well this sort of Life, which is of so little
benefit to the owner, conduceth so much
to that of the Public. But pray tell me,
do these Gentlemen set up for Minute
Philosophers? *CRI.* That Sect you must
know contains two sorts of Philosophers,
the wet and the dry. Those I have been
describing are of the former kind. They
differ rather in Practice than in Theory.
As an older, graver or duller Man from
one that is younger, and more capable or
fond of pleasure. The dry Philosopher
passeth his time but drily. He has the
honour of pimping for the Vices of
more sprightly Men, who in return offer
some small incense to his Vanity. Upon
this encouragement, and to make his own
mind easy when it is past being pleased,
he employs himself in justifying those
excesses he cannot partake in. But to re-
turn to your question, those miserable
Folk are mighty Men for the Minute
Philosophy. *EUPH.* What hinders
them then from putting an end to their
lives?

lives? *CRI.* Their not being persuaded *DIAL.*
of the Truth of what they profess. Some *II.*
indeed in a fit of despair do now and then
lay violent hands on themselves. And as
the Minute Philosophy prevails, we daily
see more examples of Suicide. But they
bear no proportion to those who wou'd
put an end to their lives if they durst.
My friend *Clinias*, who had been one of
them, and a Philosopher of rank, let me
into the secret History of their doubts and
fears and irresolute resolutions of making
away with themselves, which last he af-
sures me is a frequent topic with Men of
pleasure, when they have drunk themselves
into a little Spirit. It was by virtue of
this mechanical valour, the renowned
Philosopher *Hermocrates* shot himself
through the head. The same thing hath
since been practised by several others to the
great relief of their friends. Splenetic,
worried, and frightened out of their wits,
they run upon their doom, with the same
courage as a Bird runs into the mouth of a
Rattle Snake, not because they are bold to
die, but because they are afraid to live.
Clinias endeavoured to fortify his irreligion,
by the discourse and opinion of other
Minute Philosophers, who were mu-
tually strengthened in their own unbelief

DIAL. by his. After this manner, authority
II. working in a circle, they endeavoured to
~~to~~ atheize one another. But though he
pretended even to a demonstration against
the Being of a God, yet he cou'd not in-
wardly conquer his own Belief. He fell
sick, and acknowledged this truth, is now a
sober Man and a good Christian; owns he
was never so happy as since he became
such, nor so wretched as while he was a
Minute Philosopher. And he who has
tried both conditions may be allowed a
proper judge of both. *LYS.* Truly a fine
account of the brightest and bravest Men
of the age! *CRI.* Bright and brave are
fine attributes. But our Curate is of o-
pinion, that all your Free-thinking Rakes
are either Fools or Cowards. Thus he
argues; if such a Man doth not see his
true Interest, he wants Sense, if he doth
but dare not pursue it, he wants Courage.
In this manner from the defect of Sense
and Courage, he deduceth that whole Spe-
cies of Men, who are so apt to value
themselves upon both those qualities. *LYS.*
As for their Courage they are at all times
ready to give proof of it; and for their
understanding, thanks to nature, it is of a
size not to be measured by Country
Parsons.

XVIII. EUPH.

XVIII. EUPH. But *Socrates*, who was DIAL.
no Country Parson, suspected your Men II.
of pleasure were such through ignorance.

LYS. Ignorance of what? EUPH. Of
the art of computing. It was his op-
inion that Rakes cannot reckon *. And
that for want of this skill they make
wrong judgments about pleasure, on the
right choice of which their happiness de-
pends. LYS. I do not understand you.

EUPH. Do you grant that Sense per-
ceiveth only sensible things? LYS. I
do. EUPH. Sense perceiveth only things
present. LYS. This too I grant.

EUPH. Future pleasures, therefore, and
pleasures of the understanding, are not
to be judged of by actual Sense.

LYS. They are not. EUPH. Those
therefore who judge of pleasure by Sense,
may find themselves mistaken at the foot
of the account.

† *Cum lapidosa chiragra*
Contudit articulos veteris ramalia fagi,
Tum crassos transisse dies lucemque palustrem,
Et sibi jam seri vitam ingemuere relictam.

To make a right computation, shou'd
you not consider all the faculties and all

* Plato in Protag.

† Persius, Sat. 5.

DIAL. the kinds of Pleasure, taking into your account the future as well as the present, and rating them all according to their true value? CRI. The *Epicureans* themselves allowed, that Pleasure which procures a greater Pain, or hinders a greater Pleasure, shou'd be regarded as a Pain; and, that Pain which procures a greater Pleasure, or prevents a greater Pain, is to be accounted a Pleasure. In order therefore to make a true estimate of Pleasure, the great spring of action, and that from whence the conduct of Life takes its bias, we ought to compute intellectual Pleasures and future Pleasures, as well as present and sensible: We ought to make allowance in the valuation of each particular Pleasure, for all the Pains and Evils, for all the Disgust, Remorse, and Shame that attend it: We ought to regard both kind and quantity, the sincerity, the intenseness, and the duration of Pleasures. EUPH. And all these points duly considered, will not *Socrates* seem to have had reason of his side, when he thought ignorance made Rakes, and particularly their being ignorant of what he calls the Science of more and less, greater and smaller, equality and comparison, that is to say of the art of Computing? LYS. All this dis-

course

course seems notional. For real abilities DIAL.
of every kind it is well known we have I.
the brightest Men of the age among us. —
But all those who know the World do
calculate that what you call a good Chri-
stian, who hath neither a large Con-
science, nor unprejudiced Mind, must be
unfit for the affairs of it. Thus you see,
while you compute your selves out of
pleasure, others compute you out of busi-
ness. What then are you good for with
all your computation? EUPH. I have
all imaginable respect for the abilities of
Free-thinkers. My only fear was, their
parts might be too lively for such slow
talents as Forecast and Computation, the
gifts of ordinary Men.

XIX. CRI. I cannot make them the
same compliment that *Euphranor* does.
For though I shall not pretend to cha-
racterize the whole Sect, yet thus much
I may truly affirm, That those who have
fallen in my way have been mostly raw
Men of pleasure, old Sharpers in business,
or a third sort of lazy Sciolists, who are
neither Men of business, nor Men of spe-
culation, but set up for judges or critics
in all kinds, without having made a
progress in any. These, among Men of
the World pass for profound Theorists,
and

DIAL. and among speculative Men wou'd seem
II. to know the World; a conceited race, e-
qually useless to the affairs and studies
of Mankind. Such as these, for the most
part, seem to be Sectaries of the Minute
Philosophy. I will not deny that now
and then you may meet with a Man of
easy manners, that, without those faults
and affectations, is carried into the party
by the meer stream of Education, Fa-
shion, or Company; all which do in this
age prejudice Men against Religion, even
those who mechanically rail at Preju-
dice. I must not forget that the Minute
Philosophers have also a strong party a-
mong the Beaux. and fine Ladies, and,
as affectations out of character are often
the strongest, there is nothing so dogma-
tical and invincible as one of these
fine things, when it sets up for Free-
thinking. But, be these professors of the
Sect never so dogmatical, their authority
must needs be small with Men of sense:
For who wou'd choose for his guide in
the search for Truth, a Man whose
Thoughts and Time are taken up with
Dress, Visits, and Diversions? Or whose
Education hath been behind a Counter,
or in an Office? Or whose Speculations
have been employed on the forms of bu-
siness, who are only well read in the ways
and

and commerce of Mankind, in stock- DIAL.
jobbing, purloining, supplanting, bribing? II.
Or wou'd any Man in his senses give a
fig for Meditations and Discoveries made
over a bottle? And yet it is certain,
that instead of Thought, Books, and
Study, most Free-thinkers are the Prose-
lytes of a drinking Club. Their Prin-
ciples are often settled, and decisions on
the deepest Points made, when they are
not fit to make a bargain. LYs. You
forget our Writers, *Crito*. They make
a world of Profelytes. CRI. So wou'd
worse Writers in such a cause. Alas!
how few read! and of these, how few
are able to judge? How many wish your
notions true? How many had rather be di-
verted than instructed? How many are con-
vinced by a title? I may allow your reasons
to be effectual, without allowing them to
be good. Arguments, in themselves of small
weight, have great effect, when they are
recommended by a mistaken interest, when
they are pleaded for by passion, when they
are countenanced by the humour of the
age; and above all, with some sort of Men,
when they are against Law, Government,
and established Opinions, things which,
as a wise or good Man wou'd not de-
part from without clear evidence, a weak
or a bad Man will affect to disparage.

on

DIAL. on the slightest Grounds. LYS. And
II. yet the arguments of our Philosophers a-
~~larm.~~ CRI. The force of their reason-
ing is not what alarms, their contempt
of Laws and Government is alarming,
their application to the young and igno-
rant is dangerous. EUPH. But without
disputing or disparaging their talent at
Ratiocination, it seems very possible their
success might not be owing to that alone.
May it not in some measure be ascribed
to the defects of others, as well as to
their own perfections? My friend Eu-
cates used to say, that the Church wou'd
thrive and flourish beyond all opposi-
tion, if some certain persons minded Pie-
ty more than Politics, Practices than Po-
lemics, Fundamentals than Conjectaries,
Substance than Circumstance, Things
than Notions, and Notions than Words.
LYS. Whatever may be the cause, the
effects are too plain to be denied. And
when a considering Man observes that
our Notions do, in this most learned and
knowing age, spread and multiply, in op-
position to established Laws, and every
day gain ground against a body so nume-
rous, so learned, so well supported, pro-
tected, encouraged for the service and de-
fence of Religion: I say, when a Man
observes and considers all this, he will be

apt

apt to ascribe it to the force of Truth; DIAL^E and the merits of our cause; which, had it been supported with the revenues and establishments of the Church and Universities, you may guess what a figure it wou'd make, by the figure that it makes without them. EUPH. It is much to be pitied, that the learned professors of your Sect do not meet with the encouragement they deserve. LYS. All in due time. People begin to open their eyes. It is not impossible but those revenues that in ignorant times were applied to a wrong use, may hereafter in a more enlightened age, be applied to a better. CRI. But why professors and encouragement for what needs no teaching? An acquaintance of mine has a most ingenious Footman that can neither write nor read, who learned your whole System in half an hour, he knows when and how to nod, shake his head, smile, and give a hint as well as the ablest Sceptic, and is in fact a very Minute Philosopher. LYS. Pardon me, it takes time to unlearn religious Prejudices, and requires a strong head. CRI. I do not know how it might have been once upon a time. But in the present laudable education, I know several who have been imbued with no religious notions at all; and others who have had them

DIAL. so very slight, that they rubbed off without the least pains.

—

XX. *Panope*, young and beautiful, under the care of her Aunt, an admirer of the Minute Philosophy, was kept from learning the Principles of Religion, that she might not be accustomed to believe without a reason, nor assent to what she did not comprehend. *Panope* was not indeed prejudiced with religious notions, but got a notion of Intriguing, and a notion of Play, which ruined her reputation by fourteen, and her fortune by four and twenty. I have often reflected on the different fate of two Brothers in my neighbourhood. *Cleon* the elder being designed an accomplish'd Gentleman, was sent to town, had the first part of his education in a great School: What Religion he learned there was soon unlearned in a certain celebrated Society, which, till we have a better, may pass for a nursery of Minute Philosophers. *Cleon* dressed well, cou'd cheat at cards, had a nice palate, understood the mystery of the Die, was a mighty Man in the Minute Philosophy. And having shined a few years in these accomplishments, he died before thirty, childless, and rotten, expressing the utmost indignation
that

that he cou'd not outlive that old dog his DIAL.
Father; who, having a great notion of II.
polite manners, and knowledge of the ~~World~~
World, had purchased them to his fa-
vourite Son, with much expence, but had
been more frugal in the education of
Ghærephon, the younger Son, who was
brought up at a Country-School, and en-
tered a Commoner in the University,
where he qualified himself for a Parso-
nage in his Father's gift, which he is
now possessed of, together with the E-
state of the Family, and a numerous
Offspring. *LYS.* A pack of unpolish'd
cubbs, I warrant. *CR I.* Less polished,
perhaps, but more sound, more honest,
and more useful than many who pass
for fine Gentlemen. *Crates*, a worthy
Justice of the Peace in this County, ha-
ving had a Son miscarry at *London*, by
the conversation of a Minute Philoso-
pher, used to say with a great air of
complaint, If a Man spoils my Corn, or
hurts my Cattle, I have a remedy against
him; but if he spoils my Children, I
have none. *LYS.* I warrant you, he
was for penal methods; he wou'd have
had a Law to persecute tender Con-
sciences. *CR I.* The tender Conscience
of a Minute Philosopher! He who tu-
tored the Son of *Crates*, soon after did
justice

DIAL. justice on himself. For he taught *Lycidas*,
II. a modest young Man; the Principles
of his Sect. *Lycidas*, in return, de-
bauched his Daughter, an only child, up-
on which, *Charmides*, (that was the Mi-
nute Philosopher's Name) hanged him-
self. Old *Bubalion* in the City is carking,
and starving, and cheating, that his Son
may drink and game, keep Mistresses,
Hounds, and Horses, and die in a Jail.
Bubalion nevertheless thinks himself wise,
and passeth for one that minds the main
chance. He is a Minute Philosopher;
which learning he acquired behind the
counter, from the works of *Prodicus* and
Tryphon. This same *Bubalion* was one
night at supper, talking against the Im-
mortality of the Soul, with two or three
grave Citizens, one of whom the next
day declared himself bankrupt, with five
thousand Pound of *Bubalion's* in his
hands, and the night following he re-
ceived a note from a Servant, who had
during his lecture waited at table, de-
manding the sum of fifty guineas to be
laid under a stone, and concluding with
most terrible threats and imprecations.
LYS. Not to repeat what hath been al-
ready demonstrated; That the Public is
at bottom no sufferer by such accidents,
which in truth are inconvenient only to
private

private persons, who in their turn too may DIALS
reap the benefit of them; I say, not to II.
repeat all that hath been demonstrated ~~on~~
on that head, I shall only ask you whe-
ther there wou'd not be Rakes and
Rogues, although we did not make them?
Believe me, the World always was, and
always will be the same, as long as Men
are Men. CRI. I deny that the World
is always the same: Humane Nature,
to use *Alciphron's* comparison, is like
Land, better or worse, as it is improved,
and according to the Seeds or Principles
sown in it. Though no body held your
Tenets, I grant there might be bad Men
by the force of corrupt appetites and
irregular passions: But where Men, to
the force of appetite and passion, add
that of opinion, and are wicked from
Principle, there will be more Men wick-
ed, and those more incurably and out-
rageously so. The error of a lively Rake
lies in his passions, and may be reform-
ed: But the dry Rogue who sets up for
judgment, is incorrigible. It is an obser-
vation of Aristotle's, That there are two
sorts of Debauchees, the *ἀκεράτοις*, and the
ἀκόλατοις, of which the one is so a-
gainst his judgment, the other with it,
and that there may be hopes of the
former, but none of the latter. And in

DIAL. fact I have always observed, that a Rake
II. who is a Minute Philosopher, when
grown old becomes a sharper in busines.
LYS. I cou'd name you several such who
have grown most noted Patriots. *CRI.*
Patriots! such Patriots as *Catiline* and
Marc Antony. *LYS.* And what then?
Those famous *Romans* were brave though
unsuccessful. They wanted neither Sense
nor Courage, and if their Schemes had
taken effect, the brisker part of their Coun-
trymen had been much the better for
them.

XXI. The wheels of Government go
on, though wound up by different hands ;
if not in the same form, yet in some o-
ther, perhaps a better. There is an end-
less variety in nature, weak Men, indeed,
are prejudiced towards Rules and Systemes
in Life and Government ; and think if
these are gone all is gone : But a Man of
a great Soul and free Spirit delights
in the noble experiment of blowing up
Systemes and dissolving Governments, to
mold them anew upon other principles and
in another shape. Take my word for it ;
there is a plastic nature in things that
seeks its own end. Pull a State to pieces,
jumble, confound, and shake together the
particks of Humane Society, and then let
them

them stand a while, and you shall soon see them settle of themselves in some convenient order, where heavy heads are lowest and Men of genius uppermost. *EUPH.* *Lysicles* speaks his mind freely. *LYS.* Where was the advantage of Free-thinking if it were not attended with Free-speaking, or of Free-speaking if it did not produce Free-acting? We are for absolute, independent, original freedom in thought, word, and deed. Inward freedom without outward, is good for nothing but to set a Man's judgment at variance with his practice. *CRI.* This free way of *Lysicles* may seem new to you; it is not so to me. As the Minute Philosophers lay it down for a maxim, that there is nothing sacred of any kind, nothing but what may be made a jest of, exploded, and changed like the fashion of their Clothes; so nothing is more frequent than for them to utter their schemes and principles, not only in select Companies, but even in public. In a certain part of the World, where ingenious Men are wont to retail their Speculations, I remember to have seen a *Valetudinarian* in a long Wig and a Cloak sitting at the upper end of a Table, with half a dozen of Disciples about him. After he had talked about Religion in a manner, and with an air that wou'd make

II.

DIAL. one think, Atheism established by Law
II. and Religion only tolerated, he entered
— upon Civil Government, and observed to
his Audience, that the natural World was
in a perpetual circulation: Animals, said
he, who draw their sustenance from the
Earth, mix with that same Earth, and in
their turn become Food for Vegetables,
which again nourish the Animal kind:
The Vapours that ascend from this Globe
descend back upon it in showers: The
Elements alternately prey upon each other:
That which one part of nature loseth a-
nother gains, the sum total remaining
always the same, being neither bigger
nor lesser, better nor worse for all these
intestine changes. Even so, said this
learned Professor, the revolutions in the
civil World are no detriment to Humane
Kind, one part whereof rises as the other
falls, and wins by another's loss. A Man
therefore who thinks deeply, and hath an
eye on the whole Systeme, is no more a
Bigot to Government than to Religion.
He knows how to suit himself to occa-
sions, and make the best of every event: For
the rest, he looks on all translations of
power and property from one hand to
another with a philosophic indifference.
Our Lecturer concluded his discourse with
a most ingenious Analysis of all political
and

and moral Virtues into their first principles and causes, shewing them to be meer fashions, tricks of State, and illusions on the Vulgar. *LYS.* We have been often told of the good effects of Religion and Learning, Churches and Universities: But I dare affirm, that a dozen or two ingenuous Men of our Sect have done more towards advancing real knowledge, by extemporaneous Lectures in the compass of a few years, than all the Ecclesiastics put together for as many Centuries. *EUPH.* And the Nation no doubt thrives accordingly: But, it seems, *Crito*, you have heard them discourse. *CRJ.* Upon hearing this and other Lectures of the same tendency, methought it was needless to establish Professors for the Minute Philosophy in either University, while there are so many spontaneous Lecturers in every corner of the Streets, ready to open Mens Eyes, and rub off their prejudices about Religion, Loyalty, and public Spirit. *LYS.* If wishing was to any purpose, I cou'd wish for a Telescope that might draw into my view things future in time, as well as distant in place. Oh! that I cou'd but look into the next age, and behold what it is that we are preparing to be, the glorious harvest of our Principles, the spreading of which hath produced a visible

DIAL. ble tendency, in the Nation towards some-
II. thing great and new. C R I. One thing I
— dare say you wou'd expect to see, be the changes and agitations of the Public what they will, that is, every Free-thinker upon his legs. You are all Sons of Nature, who chearfully follow the fortunes of the common Mass. L Y S. And it must be owned we have a maxim, that *each shou'd take care of one.* C R I. Alas, Lysicles, you wrong your own Character. You wou'd fain pass upon the World and upon your selves for interested cunning Men: But can any thing be more disinterested than to sacrifice all regards to the abstracted Speculation of Truth? Or can any thing be more void of all cunning than to publish your discoveries to the World, teach others to play the whole game, and arm Mankind against your selves?

XXII. If a Man may venture to suggest so mean a thought as the love of their Country, to Souls fired with the love of Truth, and the love of Liberty, and grasping the whole extent of Nature, I wou'd humbly propose it to you, Gentlemen, to observe the caution practised by all other discoverers, projectors, and makers of experiments, who never hazard all on the first trial. Wou'd it not be prudent to try the

the success of your principles on a small DIAL.
model in some remote corner? For instance set up a Colony of Atheists in *Monomotapa*, and see how it prospers before you proceed any further at home: Half a dozen Shipload of Minute Philosophers might easily be spared upon so good a design. In the mean time, you Gentlemen, who have found out that there is nothing to be hoped or feared in another Life, that Conscience is a Bugbear, that the bands of Government, and the cement of Humane Society are rotten things, to be dissolved and crumbled into nothing, by the argumentation of every Minute Philosopher, be so good as to keep these sublime discoveries to your selves: Suffer us, our Wives, our Children, our Servants and our Neighbours to continue in the Belief and way of Thinking established by the Laws of our Country. In good earnest, I wish you wou'd go try your experiments among the *Hottentots* or *Turks*. *LYS.* The *Hottentots* we think well of, believing them to be an unprejudiced People; but it is to be feared their diet and customs wou'd not agree with our Philosophers: As for the *Turks* they are Bigots who have a notion of God and a respect for Jesus Christ. I question whether it might be safe to venture among them

DIAL. them. CRI. Make your experiment
II. then in some other part of Christendom.

LYS. We hold all other Christian Nations to be much under the power of prejudice; even our Neighbours the Dutch are too much prejudiced in favour of their Religion by Law established, for a prudent Man to attempt innovations under their Government. Upon the whole it seems, we can execute our Schemes no where with so much security and such prospect of success as at home. Not to say that we have already made a good progress. Oh! That we cou'd but once see a Parliament of true, staunch, libertine Free-thinkers!

CRI. God forbid. I shou'd be sorry to have such Men for my Servants, not to say, for my Masters. LYS. In that we differ.

XXIII. But you will agree with me that the right way to come at this, was to begin with extirpating the prejudices of particular Persons. We have carried on this work for many years with much art and industry, and at first with secrecy, working like Moles under ground, concealing our progress from the Public, and our ultimate views from many, even of our own Profelytes, blowing the Coals between polemical Divines, laying hold

on

on and improving every incident, which DIAL.
the passions and folly of Churchmen af- II.
forded, to the advantage of our Sect. As
our principles obtained, we still proceeded
to farther inferences; and as our numbers
multiplied, we gradually disclosed our
selves and our Opinions; where we are
now I need not say. We have stubbed and
weeded and cleared Humane Nature to
that degree, that in a little time, leaving it
alone without any labouring or teaching,
you shall see natural and just Ideas sprout
forth of themselves. C.R.I. But I have
heard a man, who had lived long and ob-
served much, remark that the worst and
most unwholesom weed was this same
Minute Philosophy. We have had, said
he, divers epidemical distempers in the
State, but this hath produced of all others
the most destructive Plague. Enthusiasm
had its day, its effects were violent and soon
over: This infects more quietly but
spreads widely: The former bred a fever
in the State, this breeds a consumption
and final decay. A Rebellion or an Inva-
sion alarms and puts the Public upon its
defence, but a corruption of principles
works its ruin more slowly perhaps, but
more surely. This may be illustrated by
a Fable I somewhere met with in the
writings of a Swiss Philosopher, setting
forth

DIAL. forth the original of Brandy and Gunpowder.
II. The Government of the North being once upon a time vacant, the Prince of the power of the air convened a Council in Hell, wherein upon competition between two Dæmons of rank, it was determined they shou'd both make trial of their abilities, and he shou'd succeed who did most mischief. One made his appearance in the shape of Gunpowder, the other in that of Brandy: The former was a declared Enemy and roared with a terrible noise, which made folks afraid, and put them on their guard: The other passed as a Friend and a Physician through the World, disguised himself with Sweets and Perfumes and Drugs, made his way into the Ladys Cabinets, and the Apothecaries Shops, and under the notion of helping digestion, comforting the Spirits, and cheering the Heart, produced direct contrary effects; and having insensibly thrown great numbers of Humane Kind into a lingring but fatal decay, was found to people Hell and the Grave so fast as to merit the Government which he still possesses.

XXIV. LYPS. Those who please may amuse themselves with Fables and Allegories. This is plain *English*: Liberty is a good

good thing, and we are the support of DIAL.
Liberty. C.R.I. To me it seems that II.
Liberty and Virtue were made for each
other. If any Man wish to enslave his
Country, nothing is a fitter preparative
than Vice; and nothing leads to Vice so
surely as Irreligion. For my part I cannot
comprehend or find out, after having
considered it in all lights, how this cry-
ing down Religion shou'd be the effect of
honest views towards a just and legal Li-
berty. Some seem to propose an indul-
gence in Vice. Others may have in pro-
pect the advantages which needy and am-
bitious Men are used to make in the ruin
of a State: One may indulge a pert petu-
lant Spirit; another hope to be esteemed
among Libertines, when he wants wit to
please or abilities to be useful. But, be
Mens views what they will, let us examine
what good your principles have done;
who has been the better for the instruc-
tions of these Minute Philosophers? Let
us compare what we are in respect of
Learning, Loyalty, Honesty, Wealth,
Power and Public Spirit with what we
have been. Free-thinking (as it is called)
hath wonderfully grown of late years. Let
us see what hath grown up with it, or
what effects it hath produced. To make a
catalogue of ills is disagreeable; and the
only

DIAL. only blessing it can pretend to is Luxury:

II. That same blessing which revenged the
World upon old *Rome*: That same Luxury
that makes a Nation, like a diseased
pampered body, look full and fat with
one foot in the Grave. *LYS.* You mis-
take the matter. There are no People
who think and argue better about the
public good of a State than our Sect;
who have also invented many things tending
to that end, which we cannot as yet
conveniently put in practice. *CRI.* But
one point there is from which it must be
owned the Public hath already received
some advantage, which is the effect of
your principles flowing from them, and
spreading as they do; I mean that old
Roman practice of Self-murder, which
at once puts an end to all distress, ridding
the World and themselves of the misera-
ble. *LYS.* You were pleased before to
make some reflexions on this Custom, and
laugh at the irresolution of our Free-
thinkers: But I can aver for matter of
fact, that they have often recommended
it by their example as well as arguments,
and that it is solely owing to them that a
practice, so useful and magnanimous,
hath been taken out of the hands of Lu-
natics, and restored to that credit among
Men of sense, which it anciently had. In
what-

whatever light you may consider it, this DIAL.
is in fact a solid Benefit: But the best effect of our principles is that light and truth so visibly shed abroad in the World. From how many prejudices, errors, perplexities and contradictions have we freed the minds of our Fellow-Subjects? How many hard words and intricate absurd notions had possessed the minds of Men before our Philosophers appeared in the World? But now even Women and Children have right and sound notions of things. What say you to this, *Crito?* CRI. I say, with respect to these great advantages of destroying Men and Notions, that I question whether the Public gains as much by the latter as it loseth by the former. For my own part I had rather my Wife and Children all believed what they had no notion of, and daily pronounced words without a meaning, than that any one of them shou'd cut his Throat, or leap out of a Window. Errors and nonsense as such are of small concern in the eye of the Public, which consider not the metaphysical truth of notions, so much as the tendency they have to produce good or evil. Truth it self is valued by the Public, as it hath an influence, and is felt in the course of Life. You may confute a whole shelf of School-men, and discover many

DIAL. many speculative Truths, without any great merit towards your Country. But if I am not mistaken, the Minute Philosophers are not the Men to whom we are most beholden for discoveries of that kind: This I say must be allowed supposing, what I by no means grant, your notions to be true. For, to say plainly what I think, the tendency of your opinions is so bad, that no good Man can endure them; and your arguments for them so weak that no wise Man will admit them. *L Y S.* Has it not been proved as clear as the Meridian Sun, that the politer sort of Men lead much happier lives, and swim in pleasure since the spreading of our Principles? But, not to repeat or insist further on what has been so amply deduced, I shall only add that the advantages flowing from them, extend to the tenderest Age and the softer Sex: Our principles deliver Children from terrors by night, and Ladies from splenetic hours by day. Instead of these old fashioned things, Prayers and the Bible, the grateful amusements of Drams, Dice, and Billets-doux have succeeded. The fair Sex have now nothing to do but dress and paint, drink and game, adorn and divert themselves, and enter into all the sweet Society of Life. *C R I.* I thought, *Lysicles*, the argument from plea-

pleasure had been exhausted; but since DIAL.
you have not done with that point, let us once more by *Euphranor's* rule cast up
the account of pleasure and pain, as credit and debt under distinct Articles. We
will set down in the life of your fine Lady, rich clothes, dice, cordials, scandal,
late hours against vapours, distaste, remorse, losses at play, and the terrible distress of
ill spent age increasing every day; suppose no cruel accident of jealousy, no madness
or infamy of love, yet at the foot of the account you shall find that empty, giddy,
gaudy, fluttering thing, not half so happy as a butterfly, or a grasshopper on a Sum-
mer's day: And for a Rake or Man of pleasure, the reckoning will be much the
same, if you place littleness, ignorance, rottenness, loathing, craving, quarrelling,
and such qualities or accomplishments over against his little circle of fleeting amusements, long woe against momentary
pleasure; and if it be considered that, when Sense and Appetite go off, though he seek refuge from his Conscience in the
Minute Philosophy, yet in this you will find, if you sift him to the bottom, that he affects much, believes little, knows
nothing. Upon which *Lysicles* turning to me observed, that *Crito* might dispute
against fact if he pleased, but that every
one

DIAL. one must see the Nation was the merrier
II. for their principles. True, answered
Crito, we are a merry Nation indeed :
Young Men laugh at the old ; Children
despise their Parents ; and Subjects make
a jest of the Government ; happy effects of
the Minute Philosophy !

XXV. LYRS. Infer what effects you
please that will not make our principles
less true. CRI. Their truth is not what
I am now considering. The point at pre-
sent is the usefulness of your principles ;
and to decide this point we need only
take a short view of them fairly proposed
and laid together : That there is no God
or Providence ; that Man is as the Beasts
that perish ; that his Happiness as theirs
consists in obeying animal instincts, appe-
tites and passions ; that all stings of con-
science and sense of guilt are prejudices
and errors of Education ; that Religion is a
State trick ; that Vice is beneficial to the
Public ; that the Soul of Man is corporeal
and dissolveth like a flame or vapour ;
that Man is a Machine actuated accord-
ing to the Laws of motion ; that conse-
quently he is no agent or subject of guilt ;
that a wise Man will make his own par-
ticular individual interest in this present
life, the rule and measure of all his
actions ;

actions: These and such Opinions are, it DIAL.
seems, the Tenets of a Minute Philosopher, II.
who is himself according to his own principles an Organ play'd on by sensible objects, a Ball bandied about by appetites, and passions; so subtle is he as to be able to maintain all this by artful reasonings; so sharp-sighted and penetrating to the very bottom of things as to find out, that the most interested occult cunning is the only true wisdom. To compleat his Character, this curious piece of Clockwork, having no principle of Action within it self, and denying that it hath or can have any one Free Thought or Motion, sets up for the Patron of Liberty, and earnestly contends for *Free-thinking*. *Crito* had no sooner made an end, but *Lysicles* addressed himself to *Euphranor* and me; *Crito*, said he, has taken a world of pains, but convinced me only of one single point, to wit, That I must despair of Convincing him. Never did I in the whole course of my life meet with a Man so deeply immersed in Prejudice; let who will pull him out for me. But I entertain better hopes of you. I can answer, said I, for my self, that my eyes and ears are always open to Conviction: I am attentive to all that passes, and upon the whole shall form, whether right or wrong, a

L very

DIAL. very impartial judgment. *Crito*, said
II. *Euphranor*, is a more enterprising Man
— than I, thus to rate and lecture a Philo-
sopher. For my part, I always find it
easier to learn than to teach. I shall
therefore beg your assistance to rid me of
some scruples about the tendency of your
Opinions; which I find my self unable
to master, though never so willing. This
done, though we shou'd not tread exactly
in the same steps, nor perhaps go the same
road; yet we shall not run in all points
diametrically opposite one to another.

XXVI. Tell me now, *Lysicles*, you who
are a minute observer of things, whether
a shade be more agreeable at morning or
evening or noon-day. *LYS.* Doubtless
at noon-day. *EUPH.* And what dis-
poseth Men to rest? *LYS.* Exercise.
EUPH. When do Men make the greatest
fires? *LYS.* In the coldest weather.
EUPH. And what creates a love for
iced liquors? *LYS.* Excessive heat.
EUPH. What if you raise a Pendulum
to a great height on one side? *LYS.* It
will, when left to it self, ascend so much
the higher on the other. *EUPH.* It
shou'd seem, therefore, that Darkness en-
sues from Light, Rest from Motion, Heat
from Cold, and in general that one Ex-
treme

treme is the consequence of another. DIAL.
LYS. It shou'd seem so. EUPH. And II.
doth not this observation hold in the ~~un~~
civil as well as natural World? Doth
not Power produce Licence, and Licence
Power? Do not Whigs make Tories, and
Tories Whigs? Bigots make Atheists, and
Atheists Bigots? LYS. Granting this to
be true. EUPH. Will it not hence fol-
low, that as we abhor Slavish Principles,
we shou'd avoid running into Licentious
ones? I am and always was a sincere
lover of Liberty, Legal *English* Liberty;
which I esteem a chief blessing, orna-
ment, and comfort of Life, and the great
Prerogative of an *Englishman*. But is it
not to be feared, that upon the Nation's
running into a Licentiousness which hath
never been endured in any civilized Coun-
try, Men feeling the intolerable evils of
one extreme may naturally fall into the
other? You must allow, the bulk of Man-
kind are not Philosophers like you and
Alciphron. LYS. This I readily acknow-
ledge. EUPH. I have another scruple
about the tendency of your Opinions.
Suppose you shou'd prevail and destroy
this Protestant Church and Clergy: How
cou'd you come at the Popish? I am cre-
dibly informed there is a great number
of Emissaries of the Church of *Rome*

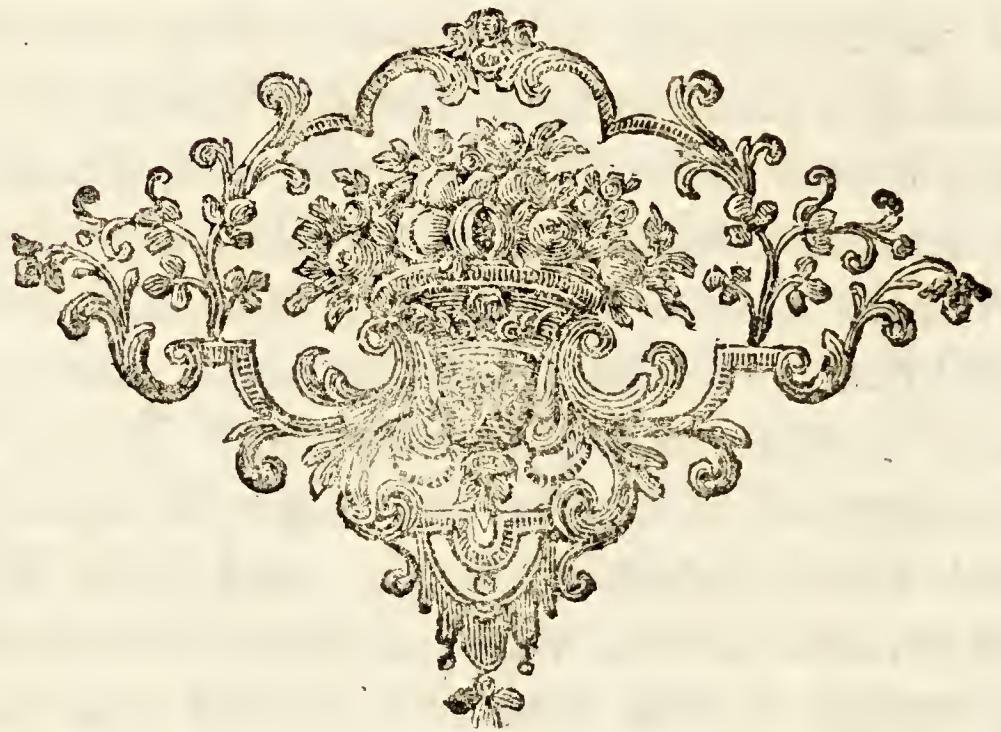
DIAL. disguised in *England*: who can tell what
II. harvest a Clergy so numerous, so subtle,
— and so well furnished with arguments to work on vulgar and uneducated minds, may be able to make in a Country despoiled of all Religion, and feeling the want of it? Who can tell whether the Spirit of Free-thinking ending with the Opposition, and the Vanity with the Distinction, when the whole Nation are alike Infidels, who can tell, I say, whether in such a juncture the Men of Genius themselves may not affect a new Distinction, and be the first converts to Popery?
Lys. And suppose they shou'd. Between friends it wou'd be no great matter. These are our maxims. In the first place we hold it wou'd be best to have no Religion at all. Secondly, we hold that all Religions are indifferent. If therefore upon trial we find the Country cannot do without a Religion, why not Popery as well as another? I know several ingenious Men of our Sect, who, if we had a Popish Prince on the Throne, wou'd turn Papists to-morrow. This is a Paradox, but I shall explain it. A Prince whom we compliment with our Religion, to be sure must be grateful.
Euph. I understand you. But what becomes of Free-thinking all the while?
Lys. Oh! we shou'd have more than ever

ever of that, for we shou'd keep it all to DIAL.
our selves. As for the amusement of re- II.
tailing it, the want of this wou'd be ~~much~~
largely compensated by solid advantages
of another kind. *EUPH.* It seems then,
by this account, the Tendency you ob-
served in the Nation towards something
great and New proves a Tendency to-
wards Popery and Slavery. *LYS.* Mis-
take us not, good *Euphranor*. The thing first
in our intention is Consummate Liberty:
But if this will not do, and there must
after all be such things tolerated as Re-
ligion and Government, we are wisely
willing to make the best of both.
CRI. This puts me in mind of a thought
I have often had, That Minute Philoso-
phers are Dupes of the Jesuits. The
two most avowed, professed, busy, pro-
pagators of Infidelity in all companies,
and upon all occasions, that I ever met
with, were both Bigotted Papists, and
being both Men of considerable estates,
suffered considerably on that score; which,
it is wonderful their Thinking Disci-
ples shou'd never reflect upon. *Hege-
mon*, a most distinguished Writer among
the Minute Philosophers, and Hero of
the Sect, I am well assured, was once a
Papist, and never heard that he profes-
sed any other Religion. I know that

DIAL. many of the Church of *Rome* abroad,
II. are pleased with the growth of Infidelity
among us, as hoping it may make
way for them. The Emissaries of *Rome*
are known to have personated several other
Sects, which from time to time
have sprung up amongst us, and why
not this of the Minute Philosophers, of
all others the best calculated to ruin both
Church and State? I my self have
known a Jesuit abroad talk among *English*
Gentlemen like a Free-thinker. I
am credibly informed, that Jesuits,
known to be such by the Minute Philo-
sophers at home, are admitted into their
Clubs: And I have observed them to
approve, and speak better of the Jesuits,
than of any other Clergy whatsoever.
Those who are not acquainted with the
subtle Spirit, the refined Politics, and
wonderful Oeconomy of that renowned
Society, need only read the account gi-
ven of them by the Jesuit *Inchofer*, in
his Book *De Monarchia Solipsorum*; and
those who are, will not be surprized
they shou'd be able to make Dupes of
our Minute Philosophers: Dupes, I say,
for I can never think they suspect they
are only tools to serve the ends of cun-
ninger Men than themselves. They seem
to me drunk and giddy with a false no-
tion

tion of Liberty, and spur'd on by this DIAL.
principle to make mad Experiments on II.
their Country, they agree only in pulling
down all that stands in their way; with-
out any concerted Scheme, and without
caring or knowing what to erect in its
stead. To hear them, as I have often
done, descant on the moral Virtues, re-
solve them into Shame, then laugh at
Shame as a weakness, admire the uncon-
fined lives of Savages, despise all order
and decency of Education, one wou'd
think the intention of these Philosophers
was, when they had pruned and weeded
the notions of their fellow-subjects, and
divested them of their Prejudices, to
strip them of their Clothes, and fill the
country with naked Followers of Nature,
enjoying all the Privileges of Brutality.
Here *Crito* made a pause, and fixed his
eyes on *Alciphron*, who during this whole
conversation had sat thoughtful and at-
tentive, without saying a word, and
with an air, one while dissatisfied at what
Lysicles advanced, another, serene and
pleased, seeming to approve some better
thought of his own. But the day being
now far spent, *Alciphron* proposed to ad-
journ the Argument till the following;
when, said he, I shall set matters on a
new Foundation, and in so full and clear

DIAL. a Light, as, I doubt not, will give infinite Satisfaction. So we changed the discourse, and after a repast upon cold Provisions, took a walk on the Strand, and in the cool of the evening returned to Grito's.



DIA-



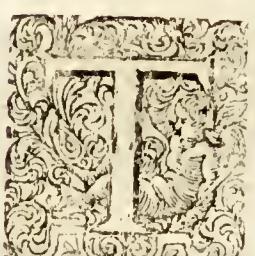
The THIRD DIALOGUE.

- I. Alciphron's account of Honour. II. Character and conduct of Men of Honour.
III. Sense of moral Beauty. IV. The Honestum or τὸ καλὸν of the ancients.
V. Taste for moral Beauty whether a sure guide or rule. VI. Minute Philosophers ravished with the abstract Beauty of Virtue. VII. Their Virtue alone disinterested and heroic. VIII. Beauty of sensible objects what and how perceived?
IX. The idea of Beauty explained by Painting and Architecture. X. Beauty of the moral System wherein it consists.
XI. It supposeth a Providence. XII. Influence of τὸ καλὸν and τὸ πρέπον.
XIII. Enthusiasm of Cratylus compared with the sentiments of Aristotle. XIV. Compared with the Stoical principles.
XV. Minute Philosophers, their talent for Raillery and Ridicule. XVI. The wisdom of those who make virtue alone its own reward.

THE

DIAL.

III. I.



HE following day as we sate round the Tea-table, in a Summer-Parlour which looks into the Garden, *Alciphron* after the first dish turned down his cup, and reclining back in his Chair proceeded as follows. Above all the Sects upon earth it is the peculiar Privilege of ours, not to be tied down by any Principles. While other Philosophers profess a servile adherence to certain Tenets, ours assert a noble freedom, differing not only one from another, but very often the same Man from himself. Which method of proceeding, beside other advantages, hath this annexed to it, that we are of all Men the hardest to confute. You may, perhaps, confute a particular Tenet, but then this affects only him who maintains it, and so long only as he maintains it. Some of our Sect dogmatize more than others, and in some more than other points. The Doctrine of the usefulness of Vice is a point wherein we are not all agreed. Some of us are great admirers of Virtue. With others the points of Vice and Virtue are problematical. For my own part, though I think the Doctrine maintained yesterday by *Lysicles* an ingenious speculation; yet, upon the whole, there are divers Reasons which incline

incline me to depart from it, and rather DIAL.
to espouse the Virtuous side of the question; III.
with the smallest, perhaps, but the most
Contemplative and Laudable part of our
Sect. It seemeth, I say, after a nice in-
quiry and balancing on both sides, that we
ought to prefer Virtue to Vice; and that
such preference wou'd contribute both to
the public Weal, and the reputation of
our Philosophers. You are to know then,
we have among us several that, without
one grain of Religion, are Men of the
nicest Honour, and therefore Men of Vir-
tue because Men of Honour. Honour is a
a noble unpolluted Source of Virtue,
without the least mixture of Fear, Inter-
est or Superstition. It hath all the advan-
tages without the evils which attend Re-
ligion. It is the mark of a great and fine
soul, and is to be found among Persons of
Rank and Breeding. It affects the Court,
the Senate, and the Camp, and in general
every Rendezvous of people of fashion.
EUPH. You say then that honour is the
Source of Virtue. *ALC.* I do. *EUPH.*
Can a thing be the source of it self?
ALC. It cannot. *EUPH.* The Source,
therefore, is distinguished from that of
which it is the Source. *ALC.* Doubtless.
EUPH. Honour then is one thing and
Virtue another. *ALC.* I grant it. Virtu-
tuous

DIAL. ous actions are the effect, and Honour is
III. the Source or Cause of that effect. EUPH.

Tell me. Is Honour the Will producing those actions, or the final Cause for which they are produced, or right Reason which is their rule and limit, or the Object about which they are conversant? Or do you by the word *Honour* understand a Faculty or Appetite? All which are supposed, in one sense or other, to be the Source of humane actions. ALC. Nothing of all this.

EUPH. Be pleased then to give me some notion or definition of it. *Alciphron* having mused a while answered, that he defined Honour to be a Principle of virtuous Actions. To which *Euphranor* replied; if I understand it rightly the word Principle is variously taken. Sometimes by Principles we mean the parts of which a whole is composed, and into which it may be resolved. Thus the Elements are said to be principles of compound bodies. And thus words, syllables, and letters are the principles of Speech. Sometimes by Principle we mean a small particular seed, the growth or gradual unfolding of which doth produce an Organized Body, animal or vegetable, in its proper size and shape. Principles at other times are supposed to be certain fundamental Theorems in Arts and Sciences, in Religion and Politics.

Let

Let me know in which of these senses, DIAL.
or whether it be in some other sense III.
that you understand this word, when ~~you say~~
you say, Honour is a Principle of Virtue.
To this *Alciphron* replied, that for his
part he meant it in none of those senses, but
defined Honour to be a certain Ardour or
Enthusiasm that glowed in the breast of a
gallant Man. Upon this, *Euphranor* ob-
served, it was always admitted to put the
Definition in place of the thing defined.
Is this allowed, said he, or not? ALC.
It is. EUPH. May we not therefore say,
that a Man of Honour is a warm Man,
or an Enthusiast? *Alciphron* hearing this
declared that such exactness was to no
purpose; that Pedants, indeed, may dis-
pute and define, but cou'd never reach
that high sense of Honour, which distin-
guished the fine Gentleman, and was a
thing rather to be felt than explained.

II. *Crito*, perceiving that *Alciphron*
cou'd not bear being pressed any farther
on that article, and willing to give some
satisfaction to *Euphranor*, said that of
himself indeed he should not undertake to
explain so nice a point, but he wou'd re-
tail to them part of a conversation he
once heard between *Nicander* a Minute
Philosopher, and *Meneclès* a Christian,
upon

DIAL. upon the same subject, which was for
III. substance as follows. *M.* From what
~~—~~ principle are you Gentlemen virtuous?
N. From Honour. We are Men of Honour.
M. May not a Man of Honour de-
bauch another's wife, or get drunk, or
sell a vote, or refuse to pay his debts,
without lessening or tainting his Honour?
N. He may have the vices and faults
of a Gentleman: But is obliged to pay
debts of Honour, that is, all such as are
contracted by Play. *M.* Is not your Man
of Honour always ready to resent Affronts
and engage in Duels? *N.* He is ready to
demand and give Gentleman's satisfaction
upon all proper occasions. *M.* It shou'd
seem by this account, that to Ruin
tradesmen, Break faith to one's own wife,
Corrupt another Man's, Take bribes, Cheat
the Public, Cut a Man's throat for a
word, are all points consistent with your
principle of Honour. *N.* It cannot be de-
nied that we are Men of gallantry, Men
of fire, Men who know the world, and
all that. *M.* It seems therefore that Ho-
nour among Infidels is like Honesty a-
mong Pirates: something confined to
themselves, and which the Fraternity per-
haps may find their account in, but every
one else shou'd be constantly on his guard
against. By this Dialogue, continued

Crito,

Crito, a Man, who lives out of the grand DIAL.
Monde, may be enabled to form some III.
notion of what the world calls Honour and men of Honour. *EUPH.* I must intreat you not to put me off with *Nicander's* opinion, whom I know nothing of, but rather give me your own judgment, drawn from your own observation upon Men of Honour. *CR.I.* If I must pronounce, I can very sincerely assure you that by all I have heard or seen, I cou'd never find, that Honour, considered as a principle distinct from Conscience, Religion, Reason, and Virtue, was more than an empty name. And I do verily believe, that those who build upon that notion have less Virtue than other Men, and that what they have or seem to have is owing to Fashion, (being of the reputable kind) if not to a Conscience early imbued with religious principles, and afterwards retaining a Tincture from them without knowing it. These two principles seem to account for all that looks like Virtue in those Gentlemen. Your Men of Fashion in whom animal life abounds, a sort of Bullies in Morality, who disdain to have it thought they are afraid of Conscience; these descant much upon Honour, and affect to be called Men of Honour, rather than conscientious or honest Men. But,
by

DIAL. by all that that I cou'd ever observe,

III. this specious Chara^cter, where there is
nothing of Conscience or Religion underneath, to give it life and substance, is no better than a meteor or painted cloud.

EUPH. I had a confused notion that Honour was something nearly connected with truth, and that Men of Honour were the greatest enemies to all Hypocrisy, Fal-lacy, and Disguise. CR I. So far from

that, an Infidel who sets up for the nicest Honour shall, without the least grain of Faith or Religion, pretend himself a Christian, take any test, join in any act of worship, kneel, pray, receive the Sacra-ment to serve an interest. The same per-son, without any impeachment of his Ho-nour, shall most solemnly declare and pro-mise in the face of God and the World, that he will love his Wife, and forsaking all others keep only to her, when at the same time it is certain, he intends never to perform one tittle of his vow; and convinceth the whole world of this as soon as he gets her in his power, and her for-tune, for the sake of which this Man of untainted Honour makes no scruple to cheat and lye. EUPH. We have a no-tion here in the Country, that it was of all things most odious, and a matter of much risque and hazard, to give the Lye

to

to a Man of Honour. C.R.I. It is very DIAL.
true. He abhors to take the Lye but not to
tell it.

III.

III. *Alciphron*, having heard all this with great composure of mind and countenance, spake as follows. You are not to think, that our greatest strength lies in our greatest Number, Libertines and meer Men of Honour. No: we have among us Philosophers of a very different character, Men of curious contemplation, not governed by such gross things as Sense and Custom, but of an abstracted Virtue and sublime Morals: and the less religious the more virtuous. For Virtue of the high and disinterested kind no Man is so well qualified as an Infidel, it being a mean and selfish thing to be virtuous through fear or hope. The notion of a Providence and future State of Rewards and Punishments, may indeed tempt or scare Men of abject spirit into practices contrary to the natural bent of their Souls, but will never produce a true and genuine Virtue. To go to the bottom of things, to analyse Virtue into its first principles, and fix a scheme of Duty on its true basis, you must understand, that there is an idea of Beauty natural to the mind of Man. This all Men desire, this they are pleased and

M delighted

DIAL. delighted with for its own sake, purely
III. from an Instinct of Nature. A Man needs
no arguments to make him discern and
approve what is Beautiful; it strikes at
first sight and attracts without a reason.
And as this Beauty is found in the shape
and form of corporeal things; so also is
there analogous to it a Beauty of another
kind, an order, a symmetry, and comeli-
ness in the moral world. And as the Eye
perceiveth the one, so the Mind doth by a
certain interior sense perceive the other,
which sense, talent, or faculty is ever
quickest and purest in the noblest Minds.
Thus as by sight I discern the Beauty of
a Plant or an Animal, even so the mind
apprehends the moral Excellence, the
Beauty, and Decorum of Justice and
Temperance. And as we readily pro-
nounce a Dress becoming or an Attitude
graceful, we can, with the same free un-
tutored judgment, at once declare, whe-
ther this or that Conduct or Action be
comely and beautiful. To relish this kind
of Beauty, there must be a delicate and
fine Taste: But where there is this natu-
ral Taste, nothing further is wanting,
either as a principle to convince, or as a
motive to induce Men to the love of Vir-
tue. And more or less there is of this
Taste or sense in every creature that hath
Reason.

Reason. All Rational Beings are by DIAL.
nature social. They are drawn one towards another by natural affections: they unite and incorporate into families, clubs, parties, and commonwealths by mutual Sympathy. As by means of the sensitive Soul, our several distinct parts and members do consent towards the animal Functions, and are connected in one Whole: even so, the several parts of these Rational Systems or Bodies Politic, by virtue of this moral or interior Sense, are held together, have a fellow-feeling, do succour and protect each other, and jointly cooperate towards the same end. Hence that joy in Society, that propensity towards doing good to our Kind, that gratulation and delight in beholding the virtuous deeds of other Men, or in reflecting on our own. By contemplation of the fitness and order of the parts of a moral System, regularly operating, and knit together by benevolent affections, the Mind of Man attaineth to the highest notion of Beauty, Excellence, and Perfection: Seized and rapt with this sublime idea, our Philosophers do infinitely despise and pity, whoever shall propose or accept any other motive to Virtue. Interest is a mean ungenerous thing, destroying the merit of Virtue, and Falshood of every kind is inconsistent with the genuine spirit

DIAL. of Philosophy. CRI. The Love therefore that you bear to moral Beauty, and your passion for abstracted Truth, will not suffer you to think with patience of those fraudulent Impositions upon Mankind, Providence, the Immortality of the Soul, and a Future Retribution of rewards and punishments ; which under the notion of promoting do, it seems, destroy all true Virtue, and at the same time contradict and disparage your noble Theories, manifestly tending to the perturbation and disquiet of Mens minds, and filling them with fruitless hopes and vain terrors.

ALC. Mens first Thoughts and natural Notions are the best in moral matters. And there is no need, that Mankind shou'd be preached, or reasoned, or frightened into Virtue, a thing so natural and congenial to every Humane Soul. Now if this be the case, as it certainly is, it follows that all the ends of Society are secured without Religion, and that an Infidel bids fair to be the most virtuous Man, in a true, sublime and heroic Sense.

IV. EUPH. O *Alciphron*, while you talk, I feel an affection in my soul like the trembling of one lute, upon striking the unison strings of another. Doubtless there is a Beauty of the mind, a Charm in

Virtue

Virtue, a Symmetry and Proportion in the DIAL.
moral world. This moral Beauty was III.
known to the ancients by the name of ~~the~~
Honestum or $\tau\ddot{o}\ \kappa\alpha\lambda\dot{o}\nu$. And in order to
know its force and influence, it may not
be amiss to inquire, what it was under-
stood to be, and what light it was placed
in by those who first considered it, and
gave it a name: $\tau\ddot{o}\ \kappa\alpha\lambda\dot{o}\nu$ according to
Aristotle is the $\varepsilon\pi\alpha\nu\epsilon\tau\dot{o}\nu$ or laudable, ac-
cording to *Plato* it is the $\eta\delta\dot{v}$ or $\omega\phi\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\mu\sigma\sigma$,
pleasant or profitable, which is meant
with respect to a reasonable mind and its
true interest. Now I wou'd fain know
whether a mind, which considers an
action as laudable, be not carried beyond
the bare action it self, to regard the op-
inion of others concerning it? *ALC.* It
is. *EUPH.* And whether this be a suf-
ficient ground or principle of Virtue, for
a Man to act upon, when he thinks him-
self removed from the eye and observa-
tion of every other intelligent Being?
ALC. It seems not. *EUPH.* Again, I ask
whether a Man who doth a thing pleasant
or profitable as such, might not be suppo-
sed to forbear doing it, or even to do the
contrary, upon the prospect of greater
pleasure or profit? *ALC.* He might.
EUPH. Doth it not follow from hence,
that the Beauty of Virtue or $\tau\ddot{o}\ \kappa\alpha\lambda\dot{o}\nu$, in

DIAL. either *Aristotle's* or *Plato's* sense, is not a sufficient principle or ground, to engage sensual and worldly-minded Men in the practice of it? *ALC.* What then? *EUPH.* Why then, it will follow that Hope of reward and Fear of punishment are highly expedient, to cast the balance of pleasant and profitable on the side of virtue, and thereby very much conduce to the benefit of Humane Society. *Alciphron* upon this appealed; Gentlemen, said he, you are witnesses of this unfair proceeding of *Euphranor*, who argues against us, from explications given by *Plato* and *Aristotle* of the Beauty of Virtue, which are things we have nothing to say to; the Philosophers of our Sect abstracting from all Praise, Pleasure, and Interest, when they are enamoured and transported with that sublime Idea. I beg pardon, replied *Euphranor*, for supposing the Minute Philosophers of our days think like those ancient Sages. But you must tell me, *Alciphron*, since you do not think fit, to adopt the sense of *Plato* or *Aristotle*, what sense it is in which you understand the Beauty of Virtue? Define it, explain it, make me to understand your meaning, that so we may argue about the same thing, without which we can never come to a conclusion.

V. *ALC.*

V. *ALC.* Some things are better understood by definitions and descriptions, but I have always observed that those who wou'd define, explain, and dispute about this point, make the least of it. Moral Beauty is of so peculiar and abstracted a nature, something so subtile, fine, and fugacious, that it will not bear being handled and inspected, like every gross and common subject. You will, therefore, pardon me, if I stand upon my Philosophic liberty; and choose rather to intrench myself, within the general and indefinite sense, rather than, by entering into a precise and particular explication of this Beauty, perchance lose sight of it, or give you some hold whereon to cavil, and infer, and raise doubts, queries, and difficulties about a point as clear as the Sun when no body reasons upon it. *EUPH.* How say you, *Alciphron*, is that notion clearest when it is not considered? *ALC.* I say it is rather to be felt than understood, a certain *je ne scay quoy*. An object, not of the discursive faculty, but of a peculiar sense which is properly called the moral sense, being adapted to the perception of moral Beauty, as the Eye to colours, or the Ear to sounds. *EUPH.* That Men have certain instinctive Sensations or Passions from nature, which make them

DIAL.
III.
—

DIAL. amiable and useful to each other, I am
III. clearly convinced. Such are a Fellow-feel-
— ing with the distressed, a Tenderness for
our offspring, an Affection towards our
friends, our neighbours, and our country,
an Indignation against things base, cruel,
or unjust. These Passions are implanted in
the Humane Soul, with several other
fears and appetites, aversions and desires,
some of which are strongest and upper-
most in one mind, others in another.
Shou'd it not therefore seem a very uncer-
tain guide in morals, for a Man to fol-
low his passion or inward feeling? and
wou'd not this rule infallibly lead diffe-
rent Men different ways, according to
the prevalency of this or that appetite or
passion? *ALC.* I do not deny it. *EUPH.*
And will it not follow from hence, that
Duty and Virtue are in a fairer way of
being practised, if Men are led by Reason
and Judgment, balancing low and sen-
sual pleasures with those of a higher
kind, comparing present losses with future
gains, and the uneasiness and disgust of
every Vice with the delightful practice of
the opposite Virtue, and the pleasing re-
flexions and hopes which attend it? Or
can there be a stronger motive to Virtue,
than the shewing that considered in all
lights it is every Man's true interest?

VI. *ALC.* I tell you, *Euphranor*, we DIAL.
contemn the Virtue of that Man, who III.
computes and deliberates, and must have ~~—~~
a reason for being virtuous. The refined
Moralists of our Sect are ravished and
transported with the abstract Beauty of
Virtue. They disdain all forinsecal mo-
tives to it; and love Virtue only for Vir-
tue's sake. Oh Rapture! Oh Enthusiasm!
Oh the Quintessence of Beauty! Methinks
I cou'd dwell for ever on this Contem-
plation: But rather than entertain my
self, I must endeavour to convince you.
Make an experiment on the first Man
you meet. Propose a villainous or un-
just action. Take his first sense of the
matter, and you shall find he detests it.
He may, indeed, be afterwards misled by
Arguments or overpowered by Temptation,
but his original unpremeditated and ge-
nuine thoughts are just and orthodox. How
can we account for this but by a moral
sense, which, left to it self, hath as quick
and true a perception of the Beauty and
Deformity of Humane Actions, as the Eye
hath of Colours? *EUPH.* May not this
be sufficiently accounted for, by Con-
science, Affection, Passion, Education,
Reason, Custom, Religion, which princi-
ples and habits, for ought I know, may
be what you metaphorically call a Moral
Sense.

DIAL. sense. ALC. What I call a moral sense is
III. strictly, properly, and truly such, and in
kind different from all those things you
enumerate. It is what all men have though
all may not observe it. Upon this *Euphra-*
nor smiled and said, *Alciphron* has made
discoveries where I least expected it. For,
said he, in regard to every other point, I
shou'd hope to learn from him, but for
the knowledge of my self, or the faculties
and powers of my own mind, I shou'd
have looked at home. And there I might
have looked long enough, without finding
this new talent, which even now after be-
ing tutored I cannot comprehend. For
Alciphron, I must needs say, is too Sublime
and Ænigmatical upon a point, which of
all others ought to be most clearly un-
derstood. I have often heard that your deepest
adepts and oldest professors in science are
the obscurest. *Lysicles* is young and speaks
plain. Wou'd he but favour us with his
sense of this point, it might perhaps prove
more upon a level with my apprehension.

VII. *Lysicles* shook his head, and in a
grave and earnest manner addressed the
Company. Gentlemen, said he, *Alciphron*
stands upon his own legs. I have no part
in these refined notions he is at present en-
gaged to defend. If I must subdue my
passions,

passions, abstract, contemplate, be en- DIAL.
moured of Virtue; in a word, if I must III.
be an Enthusiast, I owe so much deference
to the laws of my Country, as to choose
being an Enthusiast in their way. Be-
sides, it is better being so for some end than
for none. This Doctrine hath all the solid
inconveniences, without the amusing
hopes and prospects of the Christian. *ALC.*
I never counted on *Lysicles* for my Second
in this point; which after all doth not need
his assistance or explication. All subjects
ought not to be treated in the same man-
ner. The way of Definition and Divi-
sion is dry and pedantic. Besides, the
subject is sometimes too obscure, sometimes
too simple for this method. One while
we know too little of a point, another
too much, to make it plainer by discourse.
CRI. To hear *Alciphron* talk, puts me in
mind of that Ingenious *Greek*, who ha-
ving wrapt a mans brother up in a cloak,
asked him whether he knew that person?
being ready, either by keeping on, or pul-
ling off the cloak, to confute his answer
whatever it shou'd be. For my part I be-
lieve, if matters were fairly stated, that
rational satisfaction, that peace of mind,
that inward comfort, and conscientious
joy, which a good Christian finds in good
actions, wou'd not be found to fall short
of

DIAL. of all the Ecstasy, Rapture, and Enthusiasm
III. supposed to be the effect of that high and
undescribed principle. In earnest can any
Ecstasy be higher, any Rapture more affecting,
than that which springs from the love
of God and Man, from a Conscience void
of offence, and an inward discharge of
Duty, with the secret delight, trust, and
hope that attends it? *ALC.* O *Euphra-*
nor, we Votaries of Truth do not envy,
but pity, the groundless joys and mistaken
hopes of a Christian. And, as for Con-
science and rational Pleasure, How can we
allow a Conscience without allowing a
vindictive Providence? Or how can we sup-
pose, the charm of Virtue consists in any
pleasure, or benefit attending virtuous ac-
tions, without giving great advantages to
the Christian Religion, which, it seems
excites its believers to Virtue by the high-
est Interests and Pleasures in reversion.
Alas! shou'd we grant this, there wou'd
be a door opened to all those rusty Declaim-
ers upon the necessity and usefulness of the
great points of Faith, the Immortality of
the Soul, a Future State, Rewards and
Punishments, and the like exploded Con-
ceits; which, according to our system and
principles, may perhaps produce a low,
popular, interested kind of Virtue, but
must absolutely destroy and extinguish it in
the sublime and heroic sense.

VIII. *EUPH.* What you now say is DIAL.
very intelligible: I wish I understood your main principle as well. *ALC.* And are you then in earnest at a loss? Is it possible you shou'd have no notion of Beauty, or that having it you shou'd not know it to be amiable, amiable I say, in it self, and for it self? *EUPH.* Pray tell me, *Alciphron*, are all mankind agreed in the notion of a beauteous face? *ALC.* Beauty in Humane Kind seems to be of a more mixt and various nature; forasmuch as the passions, sentiments, and qualities of the Soul being seen through and blending with the features, work differently on different minds, as the sympathy is more or less. But with regard to other things is there no steady principle of Beauty? Is there upon earth a Humane mind without the idea of order, harmony, and proportion? *EUPH.* O *Alciphron*, it is my weakness that I am apt to be lost and bewildered in abstractions and generalities, but a particular thing is better suited to my faculties. I find it easy to consider and keep in view the objects of sense, let us therefore try to discover what their Beauty is, or wherein it consists; and so, by the help of these sensible things, as a scale or ladder, ascend to moral and intellectual Beauty. Be pleased then to inform me, what it is we call
Beauty

DIAL. Beauty in the objects of sense? *ALC.*
¶ III. Every one knows Beauty is that which
pleases. *EUPH.* There is then Beauty in
the smell of a Rose, or the taste of an
Apple. *ALC.* By no means. Beauty is,
to speak properly, perceived only by the
eye. *EUPH.* It cannot therefore be defi-
ned in general that which pleaseth. *ALC.*
I grant it cannot. *EUPH.* How then
shall we limit or define it? *Alciphron*, after
a short pause, said, that Beauty consisted in
a certain symmetry or proportion pleasing
to the eye. *EUPH.* Is this proportion one
and the same in all things, or is it different
in different kinds of things? *ALC.* Different
doubtless: The proportions of an Ox wou'd
not be beautiful in a Horse. And we may
observe also in things inanimate, that the
Beauty of a Table, a Chair, a Door, con-
sists in different proportions. *EUPH.*
Doth not this proportion imply the rela-
tion of one thing to another? *ALC.* It
doth. *EUPH.* And are not these relations
founded in size and shape? *ALC.* They
are. *EUPH.* And to make the propor-
tions just, must not those mutual relations
of size and shape in the parts be such, as
shall make the whole compleat and perfect
in its kind? *ALC.* I grant they must.
EUPH. Is not a thing said to be perfect
in its kind, when it answers the end for
which

which it was made? *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* DIAL. The parts, therefore, in true proportions must be so related, and adjusted to one another, as that they may best conspire to the use and operation of the whole. *ALC.* It seems so. *EUPH.* But the comparing Parts one with another, the considering them as belonging to one Whole, and the referring this whole to its use or end, shou'd seem the work of Reason: Shou'd it not? *ALC.* It shou'd. *EUPH.* Proportions therefore are not, strictly speaking, perceived by the sense of Sight, but only by Reason through the means of Sight. *ALC.* This I grant. *EUPH.* Consequently Beauty, in your sense of it, is an object, not of the eye, but of the mind. *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* The Eye, therefore, alone cannot see that a Chair is handsom, or a Door well proportioned. *ALC.* It seems to follow; but I am not clear as to this point. *EUPH.* Let us see if there be any difficulty in it. Cou'd the Chair you sit on, think you, be reckon'd well proportioned or handsom, if it had not such a height, breadth, wideness, and was not so far reclined as to afford a convenient seat? *ALC.* It cou'd not. *EUPH.* The Beauty, therefore, or Symmetry of a Chair cannot be apprehended but by knowing its use, and comparing its figure with that

DIAL. that use, which cannot be done by the Eye
III. alone, but is the effect of Judgment. It
— is therefore, one thing to see an Object,
and another to discern its Beauty. ALC.
I admit this to be true.

IX. EUPH. The Architects judge a Door to be of a beautiful Proportion, when its height is double of the breadth. But if you shou'd invert a well-proportion'd Door making its breadth become the height, and its height the breadth, the figure would still be the same; but without that Beauty in one Situation, which it had in another. What can be the cause of this, but that in the forementioned Supposition, the Door wou'd not yield a convenient entrance to Creatures of a Humane Figure? But, if in any other part of the Universe, there shou'd be supposed rational animals of an inverted Stature, they must be supposed to invert the Rule for Proportion of Doors; and to them that wou'd appear beautiful, which to us was disagreeable.
ALC. Against this I have no Objection.
EUPH. Tell me, *Alciphron*, is there not something truly decent and beautiful in Dress?
ALC. Doubtless there is.
EUPH. Are any likelier to give us an Idea of this Beauty in Dress, than Painters and Sculptors, whose proper business and study it is,

is, to aim at graceful Representations? DIAL.

ALC. I believe not. EUPH. Let us then III.

examine the Draperies of the great Ma-

sters in these Arts: How, for instance,

they use to clothe a Matron or a Man of

Rank. Cast an eye on those Figures (said

he, pointing to some Prints after *Raphael*

and *Guido*, that hung upon the Wall) what

appearance, do you think, an *English*

Courtier or Magistrate, with his *Gothic*,

succinct, plaited Garment, and his full-

bottom'd Wig; or one of our Ladies in her

unnatural Dress pinched, and stiffened,

and enlarged with Hoops and Whale-bone

and Buckram, must make, among those

Figures so decently clad in Draperies that

fall into such a variety of natural, easy,

and ample Folds, that appear with so much

dignity and simplicity, that cover the

Body without encumbering it, and adorn

without altering the Shape? ALC. Truly

I think they must make a very ridiculous

appearance. EUPH. And what do you

think this proceeds from? Whence is it

that the Eastern Nations, the *Greeks*, and

the *Romans*, naturally ran into the most

becoming Dresses, while our *Gothic* Gen-

try, after so many Centuries racking their

Inventions, mending, and altering, and

improving, and whirling about in a per-

petual rotation of Fashions, have never

N

yet

DIAL. yet had the luck to stumble on any that was
 III. not absurd and ridiculous? Is it not from
 hence, that instead of consulting Use,
 Reason, and Convenience, they abandon
 themselves to irregular Fancy, the unnatural
 Parent of Monsters? Whereas the An-
 cients, considering the use and end of Dress,
 made it subservient to the Freedom, Ease,
 and Convenience of the Body, and, ha-
 ving no Notion of mending or changing
 the natural Shape, they aimed only at
 shewing it with decency and advantage.
 And, if this be so, are we not to conclude
 that the Beauty of Dress depends on its
 subserviency to certain Ends and Uses?

ALC. This appears to be true. EUPH.
 This subordinate relative nature of Beauty,
 perhaps will be yet plainer, if we exa-
 mine the respective Beauties of a Horse
 and a Pillar. Virgil's Description of the
 former is,

*Illi ardua cervix,
 Argutumque caput, brevis alvus, obesaque terga,
 Luxuriatque toris animosum pectus.*

Now I wou'd fain know, whether the per-
 fections and uses of a Horse may not be
 reduced to these three points, Courage,
 Strength, and Speed; and whether each of
 the Beauties enumerated doth not occasion,
 or betoken, one of these Perfections?

After

After the same manner, if we inquire in-DIAL.
to the Parts and Proportions of a beautiful III.
Pillar, we shall perhaps find them answer
to this same Idea. Those who have con-
sidered the Theory of Architecture, tell
us*, the Proportions of the three *Grecian*
Orders were taken from the Humane Body,
as the most beautiful and perfect Produc-
tion of Nature. Hence were derived those
graceful Ideas of Columns, which had a
Character of Strength without clumsiness,
or of Delicacy without weakness. Those
beautiful Proportions were, I say, taken
originally from Nature which, in her
Creatures, as hath been already observed,
referreth them to some end, use, or design.
The *Gonfiezza* also, or swelling, and the
diminution of a Pillar, is it not in such
proportion as to make it appear strong and
light at the same time? In the same manner
must not the whole Entablature, with its
Projections be so proportioned, as to seem
great but not heavy, light but not little,
inasmuch as a Deviation into either ex-
treme wou'd thwart that reason and use of
Things, wherein their Beauty is founded,
and to which it is subordinate? The En-
tablature and all its Parts and Ornaments,
Architrave, Freeze, Cornice, Triglyphs,

* See the learned Patriarch of Aquileia's Commentary
on Vitruvius, l. 4. c. 1.

DIAL. Metopes, Modiglions, and the rest, have each an use or appearance of use, in giving firmness and union to the Building, in protecting it from the Weather, and casting off the Rain, in representing the Ends of Beams with their intervals, the production of Rafters, and so forth. And if we consider the graceful Angles in Frontispieces the Spaces between the Columns, or the Ornaments of their Capitels, shall we not find, that their Beauty riseth from the appearance of Use, or the imitation of natural Things, whose Beauty is originally founded on the same Principle? which is indeed, the grand distinction between *Græcian* and *Gothic* Architecture, the latter being fantastical, and for the most part founded neither in Nature nor in Reason, in Necessity nor Use, the appearance of which accounts for all the Beauty, Grace, and Ornament of the other. CRI. What *Euphranor* has said confirms the Opinion I always entertained, that the Rules of Architecture were founded, as all other Arts which flourished among the *Greeks*, in Truth, and Nature, and good Sense. But the Ancients, who, from a thorough consideration of the Grounds and Principles of Art, formed their Idea of Beauty, did not always confine themselves strictly to the same Rules and Proportions: But, whenever

ever the particular Distance, Position, Ele- DIAL.
vation, or Dimension of the Fabric or its
Parts seemed to require it, made no scruple
to depart from them, without deserting the
original Principles of Beauty, which go-
verned whatever Deviations they made.
This latitude or licence might not, per-
haps, be safely trusted with most modern
Architects, who in their bold Sallies seem
to act without aim or design, and to be
governed by no Idea, no Reason or princi-
ple of Art, but pure Caprice, joined with
a thorough contempt of that noble Sim-
plicity of the Ancients, without which
there can be no unity, gracefulness, or
grandeur in their Works; which of con-
sequence must serve only to disfigure and
dishonour the Nation, being so many Mo-
numents to future Ages of the opulence
and ill taste of the present; which, it is
to be feared, wou'd succeed as wretchedly,
and make as mad work in other Affairs,
were Men to follow, instead of rules,
precepts and models, their own taste and
first thoughts of Beauty. *ALC.* I shou'd now,
methinks, be glad to see a little more di-
stinctly the use and tendency of this Digref-
tion upon Architecture. *EUPH.* Was
not Beauty the very thing we inquired
after? *ALC.* It was. *EUPH.* What
think you, *Alciphron*, can the appearance
N 3 of

DIAL. of a thing please at this time, and in this
III. place, which pleased two thousand Years
— ago, and two thousand Miles off, without some real principle of Beauty? ALC.
It cannot. EUPH. And is not this the case with respect to a just piece of Architecture? ALC. No body denies it. EUPH. Architecture, the noble Offspring of judgment and fancy, was gradually formed in the most polite and knowing Countries of *Asia, Egypt, Greece, and Italy.* It was cherished and esteemed by the most flourishing States, and most renowned Princes who with vast expence improved and brought it to perfection. It seems, above all other Arts, peculiarly conversant about Order, Proportion, and Symmetry. May it not therefore be supposed on all accounts, most likely to help us to some rational Notion of the *je ne saay quoy* in Beauty? And in effect, have we not learned from this Digression, that as there is no Beauty without Proportion, so Proportions are to be esteemed just and true, only as they are relative to some certain use or end, their Aptitude and Subordination to which end is, at bottom, that which makes them please and charm? ALC. I admit all this to be true.

X. EUPH

X. EUPH. According to this Doctrine, DIAL.
I wou'd fain know what Beauty can be found in a moral System, formed, connected and governed by Chance, Fate, or any other blind unthinking Principle; forasmuch as without thought there can be no end or design, and without an end there can be no use, and without use there is no aptitude or fitness of Proportion, from whence Beauty springs? ALC. May we not suppose a certain vital Principle of Beauty, Order, and Harmony diffused throughout the World, without supposing a Providence inspecting, punishing, and rewarding the moral Actions of Men? Without supposing the Immortality of the Soul, or a Life to come, in a word, without admitting any part of what is commonly called Faith, Worship, and Religion? CRI. Either you suppose this Principle intelligent, or not intelligent: If the latter, it is all one with Chance or Fate which was just now argued against: If the former, let me intreat *Alciphron* to explain to me, wherein consists the Beauty of a moral System, with a supreme Intelligence at the head of it, which neither protects the innocent, punishes the wicked, nor rewards the virtuous? To suppose indeed a Society of rational Agents acting under the Eye of Providence, concurring

DIAL. in one design to promote the common benefit of the whole, and conforming their Actions to the established Laws and Order of the Divine Parental Wisdom: Wherein each particular Agent shall not consider himself apart, but as the Member of a great City, whose Author and Founder is God: In which the Civil Laws are no other, than the Rules of Virtue, and the Duties of Religion: And where every one's true Interest is combined with his Duty: To suppose this wou'd be delightful: on this Supposition a Man need be no Stoic or Knight-errant, to account for his Virtue. In such a System Vice is Madness, Cunning is Folly, Wisdom and Virtue are the same thing, where, notwithstanding all the crooked Paths and By-roads, the wayward Appetites and Inclinations of Men, sovereign Reason is sure to reform whatever seems amiss, to reduce that which is devious, make straight that which is crooked, and in the last Act wind up the whole Plot, according to the exactest Rules of Wisdom and Justice. In such a System or Society, governed by the wisest precepts, enforced by the highest rewards and discouragements, it is delightful to consider, how the regulation of Laws, the distribution of Good and Evil, the aim of moral Agents, do all conspire in due Subordination

ordination to promote the noblest End, to DIAL.
wit, the compleat Happiness or Well-be- III.
ing of the whole. In contemplating the
Beauty of such a moral System, we may
cry out with the Psalmist, *Very excellent*
Things are spoken of thee, thou City of God.

XI. In a System of Spirits, subordinate to the Will, and under the Direction, of the Father of Spirits, governing them by Laws, and conducting them by Methods suitable to wise and good Ends, there will be great Beauty. But in an incoherent, fortuitous System, governed by Chance, or in a blind System governed by Fate, or in any System where Providence doth not preside, how can Beauty be, which cannot be without order, which cannot be without design? When a Man is conscious that his Will is inwardly conformed to the Divine Will, producing Order and Harmony in the Universe, and conducting the whole by the justest Methods to the best End: This gives a beautiful Idea. But on the other hand, a Consciousness of Virtue overlooked, neglected, distressed by Men, and not regarded or rewarded by God, ill-used in this World, without Hope or Prospect of being better used in another, I wou'd fain know, where is the Pleasure of this Reflexion, where is the
Beauty

DIAL. Beauty of this Scene? Or how cou'd any
III. Man, in his Senses, think the spreading
such Notions the way to spread or propa-
gate Virtue in the World? Is it not, I be-
seech you, an ugly System in which you
can suppose no Law and prove no Duty,
wherein Men thrive by Wickedness and
suffer by Virtue? Wou'd it not be a dis-
agreeable Sight to see an honest Man
peeled by Sharpers, to see virtuous Men
injured and despised while Vice triumph'd?
An Enthusiast may entertain himself with
Visions and fine Talk about such a Sys-
tem; but when it comes to be considered
by Men of cool Heads, and close Reason,
I believe they will find no Beauty nor Per-
fection in it; nor will it appear, that such
a moral System can possibly come from the
same Hand, or be of a piece with the na-
tural, throughout which there shines so
much Order, Harmony, and Proportion.

ALC. Your Discourse serves to confirm
me in my Opinion. You may remember,
I declared, that touching this Beauty of
Morality in the high Sense, a Man's first
Thoughts are best; and that, if we pre-
tend to examine, and inspect, and reason,
we are in danger to lose sight of it. That
in Fact there is such a thing cannot be
doubted, when we consider that in these
Days some of our Philosophers have a
high

high Sense of Virtue, without the least DIAL.
Notion of Religion, a clear Proof of the III.
Usefulness and Efficacy of our Principles! —

XII. *CRI.* Not to dispute the Virtue of Minute Philosophers, we may venture to call its Cause in question, and make a doubt, whether it be an inexplicable Enthusiastic Notion of Moral Beauty, or rather, as to me it seems, what was already assigned by *Euphranor*, Complexion, Custom, and Religious Education? But, allowing what Beauty you please to Virtue in an Irreligious System, it cannot be less in a Religious, unless you will suppose that her Charms diminish as her Dowry increaseth. The Truth is, a Believer hath all the Motives from the Beauty of Virtue in any sense whatsoever that an Unbeliever can possibly have, besides other Motives which an Unbeliever hath not. Hence it is plain, those of your Sect, who have Moral Virtue, owe it not to their peculiar Tenets, which serve only to lessen the Motives to Virtue. Those therefore, who are good, are less good, and those who are bad are more bad, than they wou'd have been were they Believers. *EUPH.* To me it seems, those heroic infidel Inamorato's of abstracted Beauty are much to be pitied, and much to be admired. *Lysicles*
hearing

DIAL. hearing this, said with some Impatience ;
III. Gentlemen, You shall have my whole
Thoughts upon this Point plain and frank.
All that is said about a Moral Sense, or
Moral Beauty, in any signification, either
of *Alciphron* or *Euphranor*, or any other,
I take to be at bottom meer Bubble and
Pretence. The $\chi\alpha\lambda\circ\nu$ and the $\pi\rho\epsilon\pi\circ\nu$, the
beautiful and the decent, are Things out-
ward, relative, and superficial, which have
no Effect in the dark, but are specious
Topics to discourse and exspatiate upon,
as some formal Pretenders of our Sect,
though in other Points very Orthodox, are
used to do. But shou'd one of them get
into Power, you wou'd find him no such
Fool as *Euphranor* imagines. He wou'd
soon shew he had found out, that the
Love of one's Country is a Prejudice :
That Mankind are Rogues and Hypocrites,
and that it were Folly to sacrifice one's self
for the sake of such : That all Regards
center in this Life, and that, as this Life
is to every Man his own Life, it clearly
follows that Charity begins at Home. Be-
nevolence to Mankind is perhaps pretend-
ed, but Benevolence to himself is practised
by the Wife. The livelier sort of our Phi-
losophers do not scruple to own these
Maxims ; and as for the graver, if they
are true to their Principles, one may guess
what

what they must think at the Bottom. DIAL.

CRI. Whatever may be the Effect of III.

pure Theory upon certain select Spirits, of

a peculiar Make, or in some other Parts

of the World, I do verily think that in

this Country of ours, Reason, Religion,

Law, are all together little enough to

subdue the Outward to the Inner Man; and

that it must argue a wrong Head and weak

Judgment to suppose, that without them

Men will be enamoured of the golden

Mean. To which my Countrymen per-

haps are less inclined than others, there

being in the Make of an *English* Mind a

certain Gloom and Eagerness, which car-

ries to the sad Extreme; Religion to Fa-

naticism; Free-thinking to Atheism; Li-

berty to Rebellion: Nor shou'd we ven-

ture to be governed by Taste, even in mat-

ters of less Consequence. The Beautiful in

Dress, Furniture, and Building, is, as *Eu-*

pbranor hath observed, something real and

well grounded: And yet our *English* do not

find it out of themselves. What wretched

Work do they and other Northern People

make, when they follow their own Taste

of Beauty in any of these Particulars, in-

stead of acquiring the true, which is to

be got from ancient Models and the Prin-

ciples of Art, as in the Case of Virtue from

great Models and Meditation, so far as

natu-

DIAL. natural Means can go? But in no Case is
III. it to be hoped, that τὸ καλὸν will be the
leading Idea of the many, who have quick
Senses, strong Passions, and gross Intel-
lects.

XIII. *ALC.* The fewer they are, the more ought we esteem and admire such Philosophers, whose Souls are touched and transported with this sublime Idea. *CRI.* But then one might expect from such Philosophers, so much good Sense and Philanthropy, as to keep their Tenets to themselves, and consider their weak Brethren, who are more strongly affected by certain Senses and Notions of another kind, than that of the Beauty of pure disinterested Virtue. *Cratylus*, a Man prejudiced against the Christian Religion, of a crazy Constitution, of a Rank above most Mens Ambition, and a Fortune equal to his Rank, had little Capacity for sensual Vices, or Temptation to dishonest ones. *Cratylus* having talked himself, or imagined that he had talked himself, into a Stoical Enthusiasm about the Beauty of Virtue, did, under the Pretence of making Men heroically virtuous, endeavour to destroy the Means of making them reasonably and humanly so: A clear Instance, that neither Birth nor Books nor Conversation, can introduce a Know-

a Knowledge of the World into a conceited DIAL.
Mind, which will ever be its own Object, III.
and contemplate Mankind in its own Mir-
rour! *ALC.* *Cratylus* was a Lover of
Liberty, and of his Country, and had a
mind to make Men incorrupt and virtuous,
upon the purest and most disinterested
Principles. *CRI.* His Conduct seems just
as wise, as if a Monarch shou'd give out,
that there was neither Jayl nor Executioner
in his Kingdom to enforce the Laws, but
that it wou'd be beautiful to observe them,
and that in so doing Men wou'd taste the
pure Delight which results from Order
and *Decorum*. *ALC.* After all, is it not
true that certain ancient Philosophers,
of great Note, held the same Opinion with
Cratylus, declaring that he did not come
up to the Character, or deserve the Title
of a good Man, who practised Virtue for
the sake of any thing but its own Beauty?
CRI. I believe, indeed, that some of the
Ancients said such Things as gave Occa-
sion for this Opinion. *Aristotle* * distin-
guisheth between two Characters of a good
Man, the one he calleth $\alpha\gamma\alpha\theta\circ s$, or simply
good, the other $\chi\alpha\lambda\circ s\,\chi\dot{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\theta\circ s$, from whence
the Compound Term $\chi\alpha\lambda\circ\chi\dot{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\theta\circ\alpha$, which
cannot, perhaps, be render'd by any one
Word in our Language. But his Sense is

* *Ethic. ad Eudemum*, lib. 7. cap. ult.

plainly

DIAL. plainly this: $\alpha\gamma\alpha\theta\circ s$ he defineth to be that
III. Man to whom the good Things of Nature
 $\brace{}$ are good ; for, according to him, those
Things, which are vulgarly esteemed the
greatest Goods, as Riches, Honours, Power,
and bodily Perfections, are indeed good
by Nature, but they happen nevertheless to
be hurtful and bad to some Persons, upon
the account of evil Habits: Inasmuch as
neither a Fool, nor an unjust Man, nor an
Intemperate can be at all the better for the
Use of them, any more than a sick Man
for using the Nourishment proper for those
who are in Health. But $\kappa\alpha\lambda\circ s \kappa\alpha\gamma\alpha\theta\circ s$ is that Man in whom are to be found all
Things worthy and decent and laudable,
purely as such, and for their own sake,
and who practiseth Virtue from no other
Motive but the sole Love of her own in-
nate Beauty. That Philosopher observes
likewise, that there is a certain political
Habit, such as the *Spartans* and others
had, who thought Virtue was to be valued
and practised on account of the natural
Advantages that attend it. For which
Reason he adds, They are indeed good
Men, but they have not the $\kappa\alpha\lambda\kappa\alpha\gamma\alpha\theta\circ s$,
or supreme consummate Virtue. From
hence it is plain that, according to Aristotle,
a Man may be a good Man without believ-
ing Virtue its own Reward, or being only
moved

moved to Virtue by the Sense of Moral DIAL.
Beauty. It is also plain, that he distin- III.
guisheth the political Virtues of Nations,
which the Publick is every where con-
cerned to maintain; from this sublime and
speculative kind. It might also be ob-
served, that his exalted Idea did consist
with supposing a Providence which in-
spects and rewards the Virtues of the
best Men. For faith he in another Place*,
if the Gods have any Care of Humane
Affairs, as it appears they have, it shou'd
seem reasonable to suppose, they are most
delighted with the most excellent Nature,
and most approaching their own, which is
the Mind, and that they will reward those
who chiefly love and cultivate what is
most dear to them. The same Philosopher
observes †, that the Bulk of Mankind are
not naturally disposed to be awed by
Shame, but by Fear; nor to abstain from
vicious Practices, on account of their De-
formity, but only of the Punishment
which attends them. And again ‡, he tells
us that Youth, being of it self averse from
Abstinence and Sobriety, shou'd be under
the Restraint of Laws regulating their
Education and Employment, and that the
same Discipline shou'd be continued even
after they became Men. For which, faith

* Ad Nicom. l. 10. c. 8. † Ibid. c. 9. ‡ Ibid.

DIAL. he, we want Laws, and, in one word, for
III. the whole ordering of Life, inasmuch as
the Generality of Mankind obey rather
Force than Reason, and are influenced ra-
ther by Penalties than the Beauty of Vir-
tue; ζημιαὶ δὲ τῷ καλῷ. From all which
it is very plain, what Aristotle wou'd have
thought of those, who shou'd go about to
lesser or destroy the Hopes and Fears of
Mankind, in order to make them virtuous on
this sole Principle of the Beauty of Virtue.

XIV. ALC. But, whatever the *Stagi-*
rite and his Peripatetics might think, is it
not certain the Stoicks maintained this Doc-
trine in its highest Sense, asserting the
Beauty of Virtue to be all-sufficient, that
Virtue was her own Reward, that this
alone cou'd make a Man happy, in spight
of all those Things which are vulgarly
esteemed the greatest Woes and Miseries of
Humane Life? And all this they held at
the same time that they believed, the Soul
of Man to be of a corporeal Nature, and
in Death dissipated like a Flame or Vapour.
CRI. It must be owned, the Stoicks some-
times talk, as if they believed the Mortal-
ity of the Soul. *Seneca* in a Letter of his
to *Lucilius*, speaks much like a Minute
Philosopher, in this Particular. . . But in
several other Places, he declares himself of
a clear

a clear contrary Opinion, affirming that the Souls of Men after Death mount aloft into the Heavens, look down upon Earth, entertain themselves with the Theory of cœlestia Bodies, the Course of Nature, and the Conversation of wise and excellent Men, who having lived in distant Ages and Countries upon Earth, make one Society in the other World. It must also be acknowledged, that *Marcus Antoninus* sometimes speaks of the Soul as perishing, or dissolving into its Elementary Parts: But it is to be noted, that he distinguisheth three Principles in the Composition of Humane Nature, the $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$, $\psi\chi\eta$, $\nu\tilde{\epsilon}s$, * Body, Soul, Mind, or as he otherwise expresseth himself, $\sigma\alpha\rho\kappa\alpha$, $\pi\nu\epsilon\nu\mu\acute{\alpha}\tau\iota\o\nu$ and $\bar{\eta}\gamma\epsilon\mu\o\nu\kappa\o\nu$, Flesh, Spirit, and governing Principle. What he calls the $\psi\chi\eta$, or Soul, containing the brutal Part of our Nature, is indeed represented as a Compound dissoluble, and actually dissolved by Death: But the $\nu\tilde{\epsilon}s$ or $\tau\o\bar{\eta}\gamma\epsilon\mu\o\nu\kappa\o\nu$, the Mind or ruling Principle he held to be of a pure cœlestia Nature, $\mathfrak{D}\epsilon\tilde{\epsilon}v\bar{\alpha}\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\pi\alpha\sigma\mu\alpha$ a Particle of God, which he sends back intire to the Stars and the Divinity. Besides, among all his magnificent Lessons and splendid Sentiments, upon the Force and Beauty of Virtue, he is positive as to

* L. 3. c. 16.

DIAL. the Being of God, and that not meerly as
III. a plastic Nature, or Soul of the World,
 but in the strict Sense of a Providence in-
specting and taking care of Humane Af-
fairs *. The Stoics therefore, though their
Style was high, and often above Truth and
Nature, yet, it cannot be said, that they
so resolved every Motive to a virtuous Life
into the sole Beauty of Virtue, as to en-
deavour to destroy the Belief of the Im-
mortality of the Soul and a distributive
Providence. After all, allowing the disin-
terested Stoics. (therein not unlike our mo-
dern Quietists) to have made Virtue its
own sole Reward, in the most rigid and
absolute Sense, yet what is this to those
who are no Stoics? If we adopt the whole
Principles of that Sect, admitting their
Notions of Good and Evil, their cele-
brated Apathy, and, in one word, setting
up for compleat Stoics, we may possibly
maintain this Doctrine with a better Grace;
at least it will be of a piece and consistent
with the whole. But he who shall bor-
row this splendid Patch from the Stoics,
and hope to make a Figure by inserting it
in a Piece of modern Composition, sea-
soned with the Wit and Notions of these
Times, will indeed make a Figure, but

* Marc. Antonin. I. 2. §. 11.

perhaps

perhaps it may not be in the Eyes of a DIAL.
wise Man the Figure he intended.

III.

XV. Though it must be owned, the present Age is very indulgent to every thing that aims at profane Raillery; which is alone sufficient to recommend any fantastical Composition to the Public. You may behold the Tinsel of a modern Author pass upon this knowing and learned Age for good Writing; affected Strains for Wit; Pedantry for Politeness; Obscurities for Depths; Ramblings for Flights; the most awkward Imitation for original Humour; and all this upon the sole Merit of a little artful Profaneness. *ALC.* Every one is not alike pleased with Writings of Humour, nor alike capable of them. It is the fine Irony of a Man of Quality, 'That certain Reverend Authors, who can condescend to Lay-wit, are nicely qualified to hit the Air of Breeding and Gentility, and that they will in time, no doubt, refine their Manner to the Education of the polite World; who have been so long seduced by the way of Railery and Wit.' The Truth is, the various Taste of Readers requireth various Kinds of Writers. Our Sect hath provided for this with great Judgment. To profelyte the graver sort we have certain

DIAL. profound Men at Reason and Argument.

III. For the Coffee-houses and Populace we have Declaimers of a copious Vein.

Of such a Writer it is no Reproach to say,
fluit lutulentus; he is the fitter for his

Readers. Then, for Men of Rank and Politeness we have the finest and wittiest

Railleurs in the World, whose Ridicule is the sure Test of Truth.

EUPH. Tell me, *Alciphron*, are those ingenious *Railleurs* Men of Knowledge?

ALC. Very knowing. EUPH. Do they know for Instance

the *Copernican* System, or the Circulation

of the Blood?

ALC. One wou'd think you judged of our Sect, by your Country Neighbours: There is no body in Town but knows all those Points.

EUPH. You believe then Antipodes, Mountains in the Moon, and the Motion of the Earth.

ALC. We do. EUPH. Suppose, five or six Centuries ago, a Man had maintained these Notions among the *beaux Esprits* of an *English* Court; how do you think they would have been received?

ALC. With great Ridicule. EUPH. And now it wou'd be ridiculous to ridicule them.

ALC. It wou'd. EUPH. But Truth was the same then and now.

ALC. It was. EUPH. It shou'd seem, therefore, that Ridicule is no such sovereign Touchstone and Test of Truth, as you

Gentle-

Gentlemen imagine. *ALC.* One thing we know: Our Raillery and Sarcasms gall the black Tribe, and that is our Comfort. *CRI.* There is another thing it may be worth your while to know: That Men in a Laughing Fit may applaud a Ridicule, which shall appear contemptible when they come to themselves; witness the Ridicule of *Socrates* by the Comic Poet, the Humour and Reception it met with no more proving that, than the same will yours, to be just, when calmly considered by Men of Sense. *ALC.* After all, thus much is certain, our ingenious Men make Converts by deriding the Principles of Religion. And, take my word, it is the most successful and pleasing Method of Conviction. These Authors laugh Men out of their Religion, as *Horace* did out of their Vices; *Admissi circum præcordia ludunt.* But a Bigot cannot relish or find out their Wit.

XVI. *CRI.* Wit without Wisdom, if there be such a thing, is hardly worth finding. And as for the Wisdom of these Men, it is of a kind so peculiar one may well suspect it. *Cicero* was a Man of Sense, and no Bigot, nevertheless he makes *Scipio* own himself much more vigilant and vigorous in the Race of Virtue, from

DIAL. supposing Heaven the Prize*. And he in
III. troduceth *Cato* declaring, he wou'd never
have undergone those virtuous Toils for
the Service of the Public, if he had
thought his Being was to end with this
Life†. ALC. I acknowledge *Cato*, *Sci-
pio*, and *Cicero*, were very well for their
Times, but you must pardon me, if I do
not think they arrived at the high con-
summate Virtue of our modern Free-
thinkers. EUPH. It shou'd seem then
that Virtue flourisheth more than ever
among us. ALC. It shou'd. EUPH.
And this abundant Virtue is owing to the
Method taken by your profound Writers
to recommend it. ALC. This I grant.
EUPH. But you have acknowledged,
that the Enthusiastic Lovers of Virtue are
not the many of your Sect, but only a few
select Spirits. To which *Alciphron* making
no Answer, *Crito* addressed himself to *Euphronor*: To make, said he, a true Es-
timate of the Worth and Growth of mo-
dern Virtue, you are not to count the vir-
tuous Men, but rather to consider the qua-
lity of their Virtue. Now you must
know, the Virtue of these refined Theo-
rists is something so pure and genuine,
that a very little goes far, and is in truth
invaluable. To which that reasonable in-

* *Somn. Scipionis.*†. *De Senectute.*

terested

terested Virtue, of the old *English* or *Spartan* kind, can bear no proportion. *EUPH.* DIAL. III.
Tell me, *Alciphron*, are there not Diseases of the Soul, as well as of the Body? *ALC.* Without doubt. *EUPH.* And are not those Diseases vicious Habits? *ALC.* They are. *EUPH.* And, as bodily Distempers are cured by Physic, those of the Mind are cured by Philosophy; are they not? *ALC.* I acknowledge it. *EUPH.* It seems, therefore, that Philosophy is a Medicine for the Soul of Man. *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* How shall we be able to judge of Medicines, or know which to prefer? Is it not from the Effects wrought by them? *ALC.* Doubtless. *EUPH.* Where an Epidemical Distemper rages, suppose a new Physician shou'd condemn the known established Practice, and recommend another Method of Cure, wou'd you not, in proportion as the Bills of Mortality increased, be tempted to suspect this new Method, notwithstanding all the plausible Discourse of its Abettors? *ALC.* This serves only to amuse and lead us from the question. *CRI.* It puts me in mind of my Friend *Lamprocles*, who needed but one Argument against Infidels. I observed, said he, that, as Infidelity grew, there grew Corruption of every kind, and new Vices. This simple Obser-

DIAL. Observation on matter of Fact was sufficient to make him, notwithstanding the Remonstrance of several ingenious Men, imbue and season the Minds of his Children betimes with the Principles of Religion. The new Theories, which our acute Moderns have endeavoured to substitute in place of Religion, have had their full Course in the present Age, and produced their Effect on the Minds and Manners of Men. That Men are Men is a sure Maxim: But it is as sure that *Englishmen* are not the same Men they were; whether better or worse, more or less virtuous, I need not say. Every one may see and judge. Though, indeed, after *Aristides* had been banished, and *Socrates* put to death at *Athens*, a Man, without being a Conjurer, might guess what the Beauty of Virtue cou'd do in *England*. But there is now neither room nor occasion for guessing. We have our own Experience to open our Eyes; which yet if we continue to keep shut, till the Remains of religious Education are quite worn off from the Minds of Men, it is to be feared we shall then open them wide, not to avoid, but to behold and lament our Ruin. *ALC.* Be the Consequences what they will, I can never bring my self to be of a mind with those, who measure Truth by Convenience.

venience. Truth is the only Divinity that DIAL.
I adore. Wherever Truth leads I shall III.
follow. EUPH. You have then a Pas-
sion for Truth? ALC. Undoubtedly.
EUPH. For all Truths? ALC. For all.
EUPH. To know or to publish them?
ALC. Both. EUPH. What! wou'd
you undeceive a Child that was taking
Physic? Wou'd you officiously set an Ene-
my right, that was making a wrong At-
tack? Wou'd you help an enraged Man
to his Sword? ALC. In such Cases,
common Sense directs one how to behave.
EUPH. Common Sense, it seems then,
must be consulted whether a Truth be fa-
lutary or hurtful, fit to be declared or
concealed. ALC. How! you wou'd
have me conceal and stifle the Truth,
and keep it to my self? Is this what
you aim at? EUPH. I only make a
plain Inference from what you grant. As
for my self, I do not believe your Op-
nions true. And although you do, you
shou'd not therefore, if you wou'd appear
consistent with yourself, think it necessary
or wise to publish hurtful Truths. What
Service can it do Mankind to lessen the
Motives to Virtue, or what Damage to in-
crease them? ALC. None in the World.
But I must needs say, I cannot reconcile
the received Notions of a God and Pro-
vidence

DIAL. vidence to my Understanding, and my Na-
III. ture abhors the Baseness of conniving at
a Falshood. EUPH. Shall we therefore
appeal to Truth, and examine the Reasons
by which you are withheld from believ-
ing these Points? ALC. With all my
Heart, but enough for the present. We
will make this the Subject of our next
Conference.



The

The FOURTH DIALOGUE.

- I. Prejudices concerning a Deity. II. Rules laid down by Alciphron to be observed in proving a God. III. What Sort of Proof he expects. IV. Whence we collect the being of other Thinking Individuals. V. The same Method à fortiori proves the Being of God. VI. Alciphron's second Thoughts on this Point. VII. God speaks to Men. VIII. How Distance is perceived by Sight. IX. The proper Objects of Sight at no Distance. X. Lights, Shades and Colours variously combined form a Language. XI. The Signification of this Language learned by Experience. XII. God explaineth himself to the Eyes of Men by the arbitrary Use of sensible Signs. XIII. The Prejudice and two-fold Aspect of a Minute Philosopher. XIV. God present to Mankind, informs, admonishes, and directs them in a sensible Manner. XV. Admirable Nature and Use of this visual Language. XVI. Minute Philosophers content to admit a God in certain Senses. XVII. Opinion of some who hold that Knowledge and Wisdom

DIAL.
IV.

dom are not properly in God. XVIII. Dangerous Tendency of this Notion. XIX. Its Original. XX. The Sense of Schoolmen upon it. XXI. Scholastic Use of the Terms Analogy and Analogical explained: Analogical Perfections of God misunderstood. XXII. God intelligent, wise, and good in the proper Sense of the Words. XXIII. Objection from Moral Evil considered. XXIV. Men argue from their own Defects against a Deity. XXV. Religious Worship reasonable and expedient.

I.



EARLY the next Morning, as I looked out of my Window, I saw *Alciphron* walking in the Garden with all the Signs of a Man in deep Thought. Upon which I went down to him. *Alciphron*, said I, this early and profound Meditation puts me in no small Fright. How so ! Because I shou'd be sorry to be convinced there was no God. The Thought of Anarchy in Nature is to me more shocking than in Civil Life; inasmuch as Natural Concerns are more important than Civil and the Basis of all others. I grant, replied *Alciphron*, that some Inconvenience may possibly follow from disproving a God, but as to what you say of Fright and Shocking, all that is nothing

thing but Prejudice, meer Prejudice. Men DIAL.
frame an Idea or Chimæra in their own IV.
Minds, and then fall down and worship it. —
Notions govern Mankind, but of all No-
tions, that of God's governing the World
hath taken the deepest Root and spread
the farthest: It is therefore in Philosophy
an heroical Atchievement to dispossess this
imaginary Monarch of his Government,
and banish all those Fears and Spectres
which the Light of Reason alone can dispel;

*Non radii solis, non lucida tela diei
Discutunt, sed Naturæ species ratioque*.*

My Part, said I, shall be to stand by, as I
have hitherto done, and take Notes of all
that passeth during this memorable Event,
while a Minute Philosopher not six Foot
high attempts to dethrone the Monarch of
the Universe. Alas! replied *Alciphron*,
Arguments are not to be measured by Feet
and Inches. One Man may see more than
a Million; and a short Argument, managed
by a Free-thinker, may be sufficient to
overthrow the most Gigantic Chimæra.
As we were engaged in this Discourse, *Crito*
and *Euphranor* joined us. I find you have
been beforehand with us to day, said *Crito*
to *Alciphron*, and taken the Advantage of
Solitude and early Hours, while *Eu-
phranor* and I were asleep in our Beds.

* Lucretius. *De Natura Rerum.* Bk. II. l. 100.

DIAL. We may therefore expect to see Atheism
IV. placed in the best Light, and supported
by the strongest Arguments.

II. *ALC.* The Being of a God is a Subject upon which there has been a world of Common-place, which it is needless to repeat. Give me leave therefore to lay down certain Rules and Limitations, in order to shorten our present Conference. For as the End of debating is to persuade, all those Things which are foreign to this End shou'd be left out of our Debate. First then, let me tell you, I am not to be persuaded by Metaphysical Arguments; such for Instance as are drawn from the Idea of an All-perfect Being, or the Absurdity of an infinite Progression of Causes. This sort of Arguments I have always found dry and jejune; and, as they are not suited to my way of Thinking, they may perhaps puzzle, but never will convince me. Secondly, I am not to be persuaded by the Authority either of past or present Ages, of Mankind in general, or of particular wise Men, all which passeth for little or nothing with a Man of sound Argument and free Thought. Thirdly, All Proofs drawn from Utility or Convenience are foreign to the purpose. They may prove indeed the Usefulness of the Notion,

Notion, but not the Existence of the Thing. Whatever Legislators or Statesmen may think, Truth and Convenience are very different Things to the rigorous Eyes of a Philosopher. And now, that I may not seem partial, I will limit myself also not to object, in the first place, from any thing that may seem irregular or unaccountable in the Works of Nature, against a Cause of infinite Power and Wisdom; because I already know the Answer you wou'd make, to wit, That no one can judge of the Symmetry and Use of the Parts of an infinite Machine, which are all relative to each other, and to the whole, without being able to comprehend the intire Machine or the whole Universe. And in the second place, I shall engage myself not to object against the Justice and Providence of a Supreme Being, from the Evil that befalls good Men, and the Prosperity which is often the Portion of wicked Men in this Life, because I know that, instead of admitting this to be an Objection against a Deity, you wou'd make it an Argument for a future State; in which there shall be such a Retribution of Rewards and Punishments, as may vindicate the Divine Attributes, and set all Things right in the End. Now these Answers, though they shou'd be admitted for

DIAL.
IV.

P good

DIAL. good ones are in truth no Proofs of the
IV. Being of God, but only Solutions of cer-
tain Difficulties which might be objected,
supposing it already proved by proper Ar-
guments. Thus much I thought fit to
premise, in order to save Time and Trouble
both to you and myself. C.R.I. I think
that, as the proper End of our Conference
ought to be supposed the Discovery and
Defence of Truth, so Truth may be justi-
fied, not only by persuading its Adversa-
ries, but, where that cannot be done, by
shewing them to be unreasonable. Argu-
ments, therefore, which carry Light, have
their Effect, even against an Opponent
who shuts his Eyes, because they shew
him to be obstinate and prejudiced. Be-
sides, this Distinction between Arguments
that puzzle and that convince, is least of
all observed by Minute Philosophers, and
need not therefore be observed by others
in their favour. But, perhaps, *Euphranor*
may be willing to encounter you on your
own Terms, in which Case I have nothing
farther to say.

III. EUPH. *Alciphron* acts like a skil-
ful General, who is bent upon gaining the
Advantage of the Ground, and alluring
the Enemy out of their Trenches. We,
who believe a God, are intrenched within

Tra-

Tradition, Custom, Authority, and Law. DIAL.
And nevertheless, instead of attempting to force us, he proposes that we shou'd voluntarily abandon these Intrenchments, and make the Attack, when we may act on the defensive with much Security and Ease, leaving him the Trouble to dispossess us of what we need not resign. Those Reasons (continued he, addressing himself to *Alciphron*) which you have mustered up in this Morning's Meditation, if they do not weaken, must establish our Belief of a God; for the utmost is to be expected from so great a Master in his Profession, when he sets his Strength to a Point:

ALC. I hold the confused Notion of a Deity, or some invisible Power, to be of all Prejudices the most unconquerable. When half a dozen ingenious Men are got together over a Glass of Wine, by a cheerful Fire, in a Room well lighted, we banish with ease all the Spectres of Fancy or Education, and are very clear in our Decisions. But, as I was taking a solitary Walk before it was broad Day-light in yonder Grove, methought the Point was not quite so clear; nor cou'd I readily recollect the Force of those Arguments, which used to appear so conclusive at other Times. I had I know not what Awe upon my Mind, and seemed haunted by a sort of Panic,

DIAL. which I cannot otherwise account for,
IV. than by supposing it the Effect of Preju-
dice: For you must know, that I, like
the rest of the World, was once upon a
Time catechised and tutored into the Be-
lief of a God or Spirit. There is no surer
Mark of Prejudice, than the believing a
Thing without Reason. What Necessity
then can there be that I shou'd set myself
the difficult Task of proving a Negative,
when it is sufficient to observe that there
is no Proof of the Affirmative, and that
the admitting it without Proof is unre-
asonable? Prove therefore your Opinion,
or, if you cannot, you may indeed remain
in possession of it, but you will only be
possessed of a Prejudice. EUPH. O *Al-
cipbron*, to content you we must prove,
it seems, and we must prove upon your
own Terms. But, in the first place, let
us see what sort of Proof you expect.
ALC. Perhaps I may not expect it, but
I will tell you what sort of Proof I wou'd
have: And that is in short, such Proof as
every Man of Sense requires of a Matter
of Fact, or the Existence of any other
particular Thing. For Instance, shou'd a
Man ask why I believe there is a King of
Great Britain? I might answer because I
had seen him; Or a King of *Spain*? be-
cause I had seen those who saw him. But
as

as for this King of Kings, I neither saw DIAL.
him myself, nor any one else that ever did
see him. Surely if there be such a Thing
as God, it is very strange, that he shou'd
leave himself without a Witness; that
Men shou'd still dispute his Being; and
that there shou'd be no one evident, sen-
sible, plain Proof of it without recourse
to Philosophy or Metaphysics. A Matter
of Fact is not to be proved by Notions,
but by Facts. This is clear and full to
the Point. You see what I wou'd be at.
Upon these Principles I defy Superstition.
EUPH. You believe then as far as you
can see. *ALC.* That is my Rule of Faith.
EUPH. How! will you not believe the
Existence of Things which you hear, un-
less you also see them? *ALC.* I will not
say so neither. When I insisted on seeing
I wou'd be understood to mean perceiving
in general: Outward Objects make very dif-
ferent Impressions upon the animal Spirits,
all which are comprised under the com-
mon Name of Sense. And whatever we
can perceive by any Sense we may be sure
of.

IV. *EUPH.* What! do you believe
then there are such Things as animal Spi-
rits? *ALC.* Doubtless. *EUPH.* By
what Sense do you perceive them? *ALC.*

DIAL. I do not perceive them immediately by any
IV. of my Senses. I am nevertheless persuaded
— of their Existence, because I can collect it
from their Effects and Operations. They
are the Messengers, which running to and
fro in the Nerves, preserve a Communica-
tion between the Soul and outward Ob-
jects. EUPH. You admit then the Being
of a Soul. ALC. Provided I do not ad-
mit an immaterial Substance, I see no In-
convenience in admitting there may be
such a Thing as a Soul. And this may be
no more than a thin fine Texture of subtile
Parts or Spirits residing in the Brain.
EUPH. I do not ask about its Nature,
I only ask whether you admit that there
is a Principle of Thought and Action, and
whether it be perceptible by Sense. ALC.
I grant that there is such a Principle, and
that it is not the Object of Sense itself,
but inferred from Appearances which are
perceived by Sense. EUPH. If I under-
stand you rightly, from animal Functions
and Motions you infer the Existence of
animal Spirits, and from reasonable Acts
you infer the Existence of a reasonable
Soul. Is it not so? ALC. It is. EUPH.
It shou'd seem, therefore, that the Being
of Things imperceptible to Sense may be
collected from Effects and Signs, or sen-
sible Tokens. ALC. It may. EUPH.

Tell

Tell me, *Alciphron*, is not the Soul that DIAL.
which makes the principal Distinction be- IV.
tween a real Person and a Shadow, a living
Man and a Carcase? ALC. I grant it is.

EUPH. I cannot, therefore, know that
you for Instance are a distinct thinking In-
dividual, or a living real Man, by surer
or other Signs than those from which it
can be inferred that you have a Soul.

ALC. You cannot. EUPH. Pray tell
me, are not all acts immediately and pro-
perly perceived by Sense reducible to Mo-
tion? ALC. They are. EUPH. From
Motions therefore you infer a Mover or
Cause: and from reasonable Motions (or
such as appear calculated for a reasonable
End) a rational Cause, Soul, or Spirit.

ALC. Even so.

V. EUPH. The Soul of Man actuates
but a small Body, an insignificant Parti-
cle, in respect of the great Masses of Na-
ture, the Elements, and heavenly Bodies,
and System of the World. And the Wis-
dom that appears in those Motions, which
are the Effect of Humane Reason, is in-
comparably less than that which disco-
vers it self, in the structure and use of
organized natural Bodies, Animal or Ve-
getable. A Man with his Hand can make
no Machine so admirable as the Hand it
self:

DIAL. self: Nor can any of those Motions, by
IV. which we trace out Humane Reason, ap-
proach the skill and contrivance of those
wonderful Motions of the Heart and
Brain and other vital parts, which do not
depend on the Will of Man. ALC. All
this is true. EUPH. Doth it not fol-
low then that from natural Motions, in-
dependent of Man's Will, may be in-
ferred both Power and Wisdom incompa-
rably greater than that of the Humane
Soul? ALC. It shou'd seem so. EUPH.
Further, is there not in natural Produc-
tions and Effects a visible Unity of coun-
sel and design? Are not the Rules fixed
and immovable? Do not the same Laws
of Motion obtain throughout? The same
in *China* and here, the same two thou-
sand years ago and at this day? ALC.
All this I do not deny. EUPH. Is
there not also a Connexion or Relation be-
tween Animals and Vegetables, between
both and the Elements, between the Ele-
ments and Heavenly Bodies; so that from
their mutual Respects, Influences, Subor-
dinations, and Uses, they may be collected
to be parts of one whole, conspiring to one
and the same end, and fulfilling the same
design? ALC. Supposing all this to be
true. EUPH. Will it not then follow,
that this vastly great or infinite Power
and

and Wisdom must be supposed in one DIAL,
and the same Agent, Spirit, or Mind, and IV.
that we have, at least, as clear, full and
immediate Certainty of the being of this
infinitely wise and powerful Spirit, as of
any one Humane Soul whatsoever besides
our own? *ALC.* Let me consider; I sus-
pect we proceed too hastily. What! Do
you pretend you can have the same Af-
furance of the Being of God, that you
can have of mine whom you actually see
stand before you and talk to you?
EUPH. The very same, if not greater.
ALC. How do you make this appear?
EUPH. By the person *Alciphron* is
meant an individual thinking thing, and
not the Hair, Skin or visible Surface, or
any part of the outward Form, Colour,
or Shape of *Alciphron*. *ALC.* This I
grant. *EUPH.* And in granting this,
you grant that in a strict Sense, I do not
see *Alciphron*, i. e. that individual think-
ing thing, but only such visible signs and
tokens, as suggest and infer the Being of
that invisible thinking Principle or Soul.
Even so, in the self same manner it seems
to me, that though I cannot with Eyes
of Flesh behold the Invisible God; yet I
do in the strictest Sense behold and per-
ceive by all my Senses such Signs and
Tokens, such Effects and Operations, as
suggest,

DIAL. suggest, indicate, and demonstrate an invisible God, as certainly and with the same Evidence, at least, as any other Signs, perceived by Sense, do suggest to me the Existence of your Soul, Spirit, or thinking Principle; which I am convinced of only by a few Signs or Effects, and the Motions of one small organized Body: Whereas I do, at all times and in all places, perceive sensible Signs, which evince the Being of God. The point, therefore, doubted or denied by you at the beginning now seems manifestly to follow from the Premises. Throughout this whole Inquiry, have we not considered every step with care, and made not the least advance without clear Evidence? You and I examined and assented singly to each foregoing Proposition: What shall we do then with the Conclusion? For my part, if you do not help me out, I find myself under an absolute necessity of admitting it for true. You must therefore be content, henceforward to bear the blame, if I live and die in the Belief of a God.

VI. ALC. It must be confess, I do not readily find an answer. There seems to be some Foundation for what you say. But on the other hand, if the point was so clear as you pretend, I cannot conceive how

how so many sagacious Men of our Sect DIAL.
shou'd be so much in the dark, as not to IV.
know or believe one Syllable of it.

EUPH. O *Alciphron*, it is not our pre-
sent business to account for the Oversight,
or vindicate the Honour of those great
Men the Free-thinkers, when their very
Existence is in danger of being called in
question. ALC. How so? EUPH. Be
pleased to recollect the Concessions you
have made, and then shew me, if the
Arguments for a Deity be not conclusive,
by what better Argument you can prove
the Existence of that thinking Thing,
which in strictness constitutes the Free-
thinker. As soon as *Euphranor* had uttered
these Words, *Alciphron* stopt short and
stood in a posture of Meditation, while
the rest of us continued our walk and
took two or three turns, after which he
joined us again with a smiling Counte-
nance, like one who had made some Dis-
covery. I have found, said he, what may
clear up the point in dispute, and give
Euphranor intire satisfaction; I wou'd say
an Argument which will prove the Exi-
stence of a Free-thinker, the like
whereof cannot be applied to prove the
Existence of a God. You must know
then, that your Notion of our perceiving
the Existence of God, as certainly and

im-

DIAL. immediately as we do that of a Humane
IV. Person, I cou'd by no means digest,
though I must own it puzzled me, till I
had considered the matter. At first me-
thought, a particular Structure, Shape, or
Motion was the most certain Proof of a
thinking, reasonable Soul. But a little
attention satisfied me, that these things
have no necessary Connexion with Rea-
son, Knowledge, and Wisdom. And that
allowing them to be certain Proofs of a
living Soul, they cannot be so of a think-
ing and reasonable one. Upon second
Thoughts, therefore, and a minute Exa-
mination of this point, I have found
that nothing so much convinces me of
the Existence of another Person as his
speaking to me. It is my hearing you
talk that, in strict and philosophical
Truth, is to me the best Argument for
your Being. And this is a peculiar Ar-
gument inapplicable to your purpose:
for you will not, I suppose, pretend that
God speaks to Man in the same clear and
sensible manner, as one Man doth to ano-
ther.

VII. EUPH. How! is then the Im-
pression of Sound so much more evident
than that of other Senses? Or, if it be,
is the voice of Man louder than that of
Thunder?

Thunder? *ALC.* Alas! You mistake the DIAL.
point. What I mean is not the Sound of IV.
Speech meerly as such, but the arbitrary use
of sensible Signs, which have no Similitude
or necessary Connexion with the things
signified, so as by the apposite Manage-
ment of them, to suggest and exhibit to
my mind an endless variety of things,
differing in nature, time and place, thereby
informing me, entertaining me, and di-
recting me how to act, not only with re-
gard to things near and present, but
also, with regard to things distant and
future. No matter, whether these Signs
are pronounced or written, whether they
enter by the Eye or the Ear: they have
the same use, and are equally Proofs of an
intelligent, thinking, designing Cause.

EUPH. But what if it shou'd appear that
God really speaks to Man; wou'd this
content you? *ALC.* I am for admitting no
inward Speech, no holy Instincts, or Sug-
gestions of Light or Spirit. All that, you
must know, passeth with Men of Sense
for nothing. If you do not make it plain
to me, that God speaks to Men by out-
ward sensible Signs, of such sort and in
such manner, as I have defined, you do
nothing. *EUPH.* But if it shall ap-
pear plainly, that God speaks to Men, by
the intervention and use of arbitrary,
outward,

DIAL. outward, sensible Signs, having no Resemblance or necessary Connexion with the things they stand for and suggest: if it shall appear, that by innumerable Combinations of these Signs, an endless variety of things is discovered and made known to us; and that we are thereby instructed or informed in their different Natures; that we are taught and admonished what to shun, and what to pursue; and are directed how to regulate our Motions, and how to act with respect to things distant from us, as well in time as place; will this content you? ALC. It is the very thing I wou'd have you make out; for therein consists the force and use and nature of Language.

VIII. EUPH. Look, *Alciphron*, do you not see the Castle upon yonder Hill? ALC. I do. EUPH. Is it not at a great Distance from you? ALC. It is. EUPH. Tell me, *Alciphron*, is not Distance a Line turned End-wise to the Eye? ALC. Doubtless. EUPH. And can a Line, in that Situation, project more than one single Point on the Bottom of the Eye? ALC. It cannot. EUPH. Therefore the Appearance of a long and of a short Distance is of the same Magnitude, or rather of no Magnitude at all, being in all Cases one

one single Point. *ALC.* It seems so. *DIAL.*
EUPH. Shou'd it not follow from hence,
that Distance is not immediately perceived
by the Eye? *ALC.* It shou'd. *EUPH.*
Must it not then be perceived by the me-
diation of some other Thing? *ALC.* It
must. *EUPH.* To discover what this is,
let us examine what Alteration there may
be in the Appearance of the same Object,
placed at different Distances from the Eye.
Now I find by Experience that, when an
Object is removed still farther and farther
off in a direct Line from the Eye, its vi-
sible Appearance still grows lesser and
fainter, and this Change of Appearance,
being proportional and universal, seems to
me to be that by which we apprehend the
various Degrees of Distance. *ALC.* I
have nothing to object to this. *EUPH.*
But Littleness or Faintness, in their own
Nature, seem to have no necessary Con-
nection with greater Length of Distance.
ALC. I admit this to be true. *EUPH.*
Will it not follow then, that they cou'd
never suggest it but from Experience?
ALC. It will. *EUPH.* That is to say,
we perceive Distance, not immediately,
but by mediation of a Sign, which hath
no Likeness to it, or necessary Connexion
with it, but only suggests it from repeated
Experience as Words do Things. *ALC.*
Hold,

DIAL. Hold, *Euphranor*; now I think of it, the
IV. Writers in Optics tell us of an Angle made
by the two Optic Axes, where they meet
in the visible Point or Object; which
Angle the obtuser it is the nearer it shews
the Object to be, and by how much the
acuteer by so much the farther off; and
this by a necessary demonstrable Connexion.
EUPH. The Mind then finds
out the Distance of Things by Geometry.
ALC. It doth. *EUPH.* Shou'd it not
follow therefore that no body cou'd see
but those who had learned Geometry,
and knew something of Lines and Angles?
ALC. There is a sort of natural Geome-
try which is got without Learning.
EUPH. Pray inform me, *Alciphron*, in
order to frame a Proof of any kind, or
deduce one Point from another, is it not
necessary, that I perceive the Connexion
of the Terms in the Premises, and the
Connexion of the Premises with the Con-
clusion; and, in general, to know one
Thing by means of another, must I not
first know that other Thing? when I per-
ceive your Meaning by your Words, must I
not first perceive the Words themselves?
and must I not know the Premises before I
infer the Conclusion? *ALC.* All this is
true. *EUPH.* Whoever therefore col-
lects a nearer Distance from a wider Angle,

or a farther Distance from an acuter Angle, DIAL.
must first perceive the Angles themselves. IV.
And he who doth not perceive those Angles,
can infer nothing from them. Is it so or
not? ALC. It is as you say. EUPH.
Ask now the first Man you meet, whether
he perceives or knows any thing of those
Optic Angles? Or whether he ever thinks
about them, or makes any Inferences from
them, either by natural or artificial Geo-
metry? What Answer do you think he
wou'd make? ALC. To speak the Truth,
I believe his Answer wou'd be, that he
knew nothing of those Matters. EUPH.
It cannot therefore be, that Men judge of
Distance by Angles: Nor consequently
can there be any Force in the Argument
you drew from thence, to prove that Dis-
tance is perceived by means of something
which hath a necessary Connexion with it.
ALC. I agree with you.

IX. EUPH. To me it seems, that a Man
may know whether he perceives a Thing or
no; and if he perceives it, whether it be im-
mediately or mediately: And if mediately,
whether by means of something like or un-
like, necessarily or arbitrarily connected with
it. ALC. It seems so. EUPH. And is it not
certain, that Distance is perceived only by
Experience, if it be neither perceived im-

Q

mediately

DIAL. mediately by itself, nor by means of any
IV. Image, nor of any Lines and Angles, which
— are like it, or have a necessary Connexion
with it? ALC. It is. EUPH. Doth
it not seem to follow from what hath been
said and allowed by you; that before all
Experience a Man wou'd not imagine, the
Things he saw were at any Distance from
him? ALC. How! let me see. EUPH.
The Littleness or Faintness of Appear-
ance, or any other Idea or Sensation, not
necessarily connected with, or resembling
Distance, can no more suggest different
Degrees of Distance, or any Distance at
all, to the Mind, which hath not expe-
rienced a Connexion of the Things signi-
fying and signified, than Words can sug-
gest Notions before a Man hath learned the
Language. ALC. I allow this to be true.
EUPH. Will it not thence follow, that a
Man born blind, and made to see, wou'd,
upon first receiving his Sight, take the
Things he saw, not to be at any Distance
from him, but in his Eye, or rather in his
Mind? ALC. I must own it seems so;
and yet, on the other hand, I can hardly
persuade myself, that, if I were in such a
State, I shou'd think those Objects, which
I now see at so great Distance, to be at no
Distance at all. EUPH. It seems then,
that you now think the Objects of Sight
are

are at a Distance from you. *ALC.* Doubt-DIAL.
less I do. Can any one question but yon- IV.
der Castle is at a great Distance? *EUPH.*
Tell me, *Alciphron*, can you discern the
Doors, Windows, and Battlements of that
same Castle? *ALC.* I cannot. At this
Distance it seems only a small round Tower.
EUPH. But I, who have been at it, know
that it is no small round Tower, but a
large square Building with Battlements
and Turrets, which it seems you do not
see. *ALC.* What will you infer from
thence? *EUPH.* I wou'd infer, that
the very Object, which you strictly and
properly perceive by Sight, is not that
Thing which is several Miles distant.
ALC. Why so? *EUPH.* Because a
little round Object is one thing, and a great
square Object is another. Is it not? *ALC.*
I cannot deny it. *EUPH.* Tell me, is not
the visible Appearance alone the proper
Object of Sight? *ALC.* It is. What
think you now (said *Euphranor* pointing
towards the Heavens) of the visible Ap-
pearance of yonder Planet? Is it not a
round luminous Flat, no bigger than a
Sixpence? *ALC.* What then? *EUPH.*
Tell me then, what you think of the Pla-
net itself. Do you not conceive it to be
a vast Opaque Globe, with several un-
equal Risings and Vallies? *ALC.* I do.

DIAL. *EUPH.* How can you therefore conclude,
IV. that the proper Object of your Sight exists
at a Distance? *ALC.* I confess I know
not. *EUPH.* For your farther Convic-
tion, do but consider that crimson Cloud.
Think you that if you were in the very
Place where it is, you wou'd perceive any
Thing like what you now see? *ALC.* By
no means. I shou'd perceive only a dark
Mist. *EUPH.* Is it not plain, therefore,
that neither the Castle, the Planet, nor the
Cloud, which you see here, are those real
ones which you suppose exist at a Dis-
tance?

X. *ALC.* What am I to think then?
Do we see any thing at all, or is it alto-
gether Fancy and Illusion? *EUPH.* Upon
the whole, it seems the proper Objects of
Sight are Light and Colours, with their
several Shades and Degrees, all which,
being infinitely diversified and combined,
do form a Language wonderfully adapted
to suggest and exhibit to us the Distances,
Figures, Situations, Dimensions, and va-
rious Qualities of tangible Objects; not
by Similitude, nor yet by Inference of
necessary Connexion, but by the arbitrary
Imposition of Providence, just as Words
suggest the Things signified by them.
ALC. How! Do we not, strictly speak-
ing,

ing, perceive by Sight such Things as DIAL.
Trees, Houses, Men, Rivers, and the IV.
like? EUPH. We do, indeed, perceive
or apprehend those Things by the Faculty
of Sight. But will it follow from thence,
that they are the proper and immediate
Objects of Sight, any more than that all
those Things are the proper and immedi-
ate Objects of Hearing, which are signified
by the Help of Words or Sounds? ALC.
You wou'd have us think then, that Light,
Shades, and Colours, variously combined,
answer to the several Articulations of Sound
in Language, and that, by means thereof,
all sorts of Objects are suggested to the
Mind through the Eye, in the same man-
ner as they are suggested by Words or
Sounds through the Ear; that is, neither
from necessary Deduction to the Judgment,
nor from Similitude to the Fancy, but
purely and solely from Experience, Cus-
tom, and Habit. EUPH. I wou'd not
have you think any thing, more than the
Nature of Things obligeth you to think,
nor submit in the least to my Judgment,
but only to the Force of Truth, which is
an Imposition that I suppose the freest
Thinkers will not pretend to be exempt
from. ALC. You have led me, it seems,
Step by Step, till I am got I know not
where. But I shall try to get out again,

DIAL. if not by the Way I came, yet by some
IV. other of my own finding. Here *Alci-*
pbron having made a short Pause, proceeded
as follows.

XI. Answer me, *Euphranor*, shou'd it not follow from these Principles, that a Man born blind, and made to see, wou'd at first Sight, not only not perceive their Distance, but also not so much as know the very Things themselves which he saw, for Instance, Men or Trees ? which surely to suppose must be absurd. *EUPH.* I grant, in consequence of those Principles, which both you and I have admitted, that such a one wou'd never think of Men, Trees, or any other Objects that he had been accustomed to perceive by Touch, upon having his Mind filled with new Sensations of Light and Colours, whose various Combinations he doth not yet understand, or know the Meaning of, no more than a *Chinese*, upon first hearing the Words *Man* and *Tree*, wou'd think of the Things signified by them. In both Cases, there must be Time and Experience, by repeated Acts, to acquire a Habit of knowing the Connexion between the Signs and Things signified, that is to say, of understanding the Language, whether of the Eyes or of the Ears. And I conceive no Absurdity in all this.

ALC.

ALC. I see therefore, in strict Philo- DIAL.
phical Truth, that Rock only in the same IV.
Sense that I may be said to hear it, when
the Word *Rock* is pronounced. EUPH.

In the very same. ALC. How comes
it to pass then, that every one shall
say he sees, for Instance, a Rock or a
House, when those Things are before his
Eyes; but no body will say he hears a Rock
or a House, but only the words or sounds
themselves, by which those things are said
to be signified or suggested, but not
heard? Besides, if Vision be only a Lan-
guage speaking to the Eyes, it may be
asked; When did Men learn this Lan-
guage? To acquire the knowledge of so
many Signs, as go to the making up a
Language, is a work of some difficulty.
But will any Man say he hath spent time,
or been at pains, to learn this Language
of Vision? EUPH. No wonder, we
cannot assign a time beyond our remotest
Memory. If we have been all practising
this Language, ever since our first en-
trance into the World: If the Author of
Nature constantly speaks to the Eyes of all
Mankind, even in their earliest Infancy,
whenever the Eyes are open in the Light,
whether alone or in Company: It doth
not seem to me at all strange, that Men
shou'd not be aware they had ever learn-

DIAL. ed a Language, begun so early, and practised so constantly, as this of Vision. And, if we also consider that it is the same throughout the whole World, and not, like other Languages, differing in different places, it will not seem unaccountable, that Men shou'd mistake the Connexion between the proper Objects of Sight and the things signified by them, to be founded in necessary Relation, or Likeness, or that they shou'd even take them for the same things. Hence it seems easy to conceive, why Men, who do not think, shou'd confound in this Language of Vision the Signs with the things signified, otherwise than they are wont to do, in the various particular Languages formed by the several Nations of Men.

XII. It may be also worth while to observe, that Signs being little considered in themselves, or for their own sake, but only in their relative Capacity, and for the sake of those things whereof they are Signs, it comes to pass, that the mind often overlooks them, so as to carry its Attention immediately on to the things signified. Thus, for example, in reading we run over the Characters with the slightest regard, and pass on to the meaning. Hence it is frequent for Men to say, they

they see Words, and Notions, and Things DIAL.
in reading of a Book ; whereas in strict-

IV.

ness, they see only the Characters, which suggest Words, Notions, and Things. And by parity of Reason, may we not suppose, that Men, not resting in, but overlooking, the immediate and proper Objects of Sight, as in their own Nature of small moment, carry their Attention onward to the very things signified, and talk as if they saw the secondary Objects ? which, in truth and strictness, are not seen but only suggested, and apprehended by means of the proper Objects of Sight, which alone are seen. *ALC.* To speak my mind freely, this Dissertation grows tedious, and runs into points too dry and minute for a Gentleman's Attention. I thought, said *Crito*, we had been told, the Minute Philosophers loved to consider things closely and minutely. *ALC.* That is true, but in so polite an Age who wou'd be a meer Philosopher ? There is a certain scholastic Accuracy which ill suits the freedom and ease of a well-bred Man. But, to cut short this Chicane, I propound it fairly to your own Conscience, whether you really think, that God himself speaks every day and in every place to the Eyes of all Men ? *EUPH.* That is really and in truth my Opinion ; and it shou'd be

yours

DIAL. yours too, if you are consistent with your
IV. self, and abide by your own Definition of
Language. Since you cannot deny, that the
Great Mover and Author of Nature con-
stantly explaineth himself to the Eyes of
Men, by the sensible intervention of ar-
bitrary Signs, which have no Similitude
or Connexion with the things signified; so
as by compounding and disposing them,
to suggest and exhibit an endless variety
of Objects differing in nature, time, and
place, thereby informing and directing
Men, how to act with respect to things
distant and future, as well as near and
present. In consequence, I say, of your
own Sentiments and Concessions, you
have as much reason to think, the univer-
sal Agent or God speaks to your Eyes, as
you can have for thinking any particular
Person speaks to your Ears. *ALC.* I can-
not help thinking, that some Fallacy runs
throughout this whole Ratiocination,
though perhaps I may not readily point it
out. Hold! let me see. In Language the
Signs are arbitrary, are they not? *EUPH.*
They are. *ALC.* And consequently, they
do not always suggest real matters of Fact.
Whereas this natural Language, as you
call it, or these visible Signs do always
suggest things, in the same uniform way,
and have the same constant regular Con-
nection

nexion with matters of Fact: whence it DIAL.
shou'd seem, the Connexion was necessary, IV.
and therefore, according to the Definition
premised, it can be no Language. How
do you solve this Objection? EUPH.
You may solve it your self, by the help of
a Picture or Looking-glaſſ. ALC. You
are in the right. I ſee there is nothing in
it. I know not what else to ſay to this
Opinion, more than that it is ſo odd and
contrary to my way of thinking, that I
ſhall never affent to it.

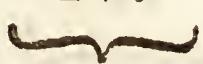
XIII. EUPH. Be pleased to recollect
your own Lectures upon Prejudice, and
apply them in the present case. Perhaps
they may help you to follow where Rea-
ſon leads, and to ſuspect Notions which
are ſtrongly riveted, without having been
ever examined. ALC. I diſdain the ſu-
picion of Prejudice. And I do not ſpeak
only for my ſelf. I know a Club of moſt
ingenious Men, the freeſt from Prejudice of
any Men alive, who abhor the Notion of
a God, and I doubt not wou'd be very
able to untie this knot. Upon which
Words of *Alciphron*, I, who had acted
the part of an indifferent ſtander-by, ob-
ſerved to him, that it misbecame his Cha-
racter and repeated Profefſions, to own an
Attachment to the Judgment, or build
upon

DIAL. upon the presumed Abilities of other Men
IV. how ingenious soever: and that this pro-
ceeding might encourage his Adversaries
to have recourse to Authority, in which
perhaps they wou'd find their account
more than he. Oh! said *Crito*, I have
often observed the Conduct of Minute
Philosophers. When one of them has got
a ring of Disciples round him, his me-
thod is to exclaim against Prejudice, and
recommend thinking and reasoning, giving
to understand that himself is a Man of
deep Researches and close Argument, one
who examines impartially and concludes
warily. The same Man in other Com-
pany, if he chance to be pressed with
Reason, shall laugh at Logic and assume
the lazy supine Airs of a fine Gentleman,
a Wit, a Railleur, to avoid the dryness of
a regular and exact Inquiry. This double
Face of the Minute Philosopher is of no
small use to propagate and maintain his
Notions. Though to me it seems a plain
Case, that if a fine Gentleman will shake
off Authority, and appeal from Religion
to Reason, unto Reason he must go: And
if he cannot go without leading strings,
surely he had better be led by the Autho-
rity of the Public, than by that of any
knot of Minute Philosophers. *ALC.*
Gentlemen, this Discourse is very irksome
and

and needless. For my part, I am a friend DIAL. to Inquiry. I am willing Reason shou'd have its full and free Scope. I build on no Man's Authority. For my part I have no interest in denying a God. Any Man may believe or not believe a God as he pleases for me. But after all, *Euphranor* must allow me to stare a little at his Conclusions. EUPH. The Conclusions are yours as much as mine, for you were led to them by your own Concessions.

XIV. You it seems stare to find, that God is not far from every one of us, and that in him we live and move and have our Being. You, who in the beginning of this Morning's Conference, thought it strange, that God shou'd leave himself without a witness, do now think it strange the witness shou'd be so full and clear.

ALC. I must own I do. I was aware, indeed, of a certain Metaphysical Hypothesis, of our seeing all things in God by the union of the Humane Soul with the intelligible Substance of the Deity, which neither I nor any one else cou'd make sense of. But I never imagined it cou'd be pretended, that we saw God with our fleshly Eyes as plain as we see any Humane Person whatsoever, and that he daily speaks to our Senses in a manifest and clear

DIAL. clear Dialect. *CRI.* This Language hath
IV. a necessary Connexion with Knowledge,
 Wisdom, and Goodness. It is equivalent
to a constant Creation, betokening an im-
mediate act of Power and Providence. It
cannot be accounted for by mechanical
Principles, by Atoms, Attractions, or Ef-
fluvia. The instantaneous Production
and Reproduction of so many Signs com-
bined, dissolved, transposed, diversified,
and adapted to such an endless variety of
purposes, ever shifting with the occasions
and suited to them, being utterly inex-
plicable and unaccountable by the Laws
of Motion, by Chance, by Fate, or the
like blind Principles, doth set forth and
testify the immediate Operation of a
Spirit or thinking Being; and not merely of
a Spirit, which every Motion or Gravita-
tion may possibly infer, but of one wise,
good and provident Spirit, who directs
and rules and governs the World. Some
Philosophers, being convinced of the
Wisdom and Power of the Creator, from
the make and contrivance of organized
Bodies and orderly System of the World,
did nevertheless imagine, that he left this
System with all its parts and contents
well adjusted and put in motion, as an
Artist leaves a Clock, to go thenceforward
of it self for a certain Period. But this

visual

visual Language proves, not a Creator DIAL.
meerly, but a provident Governor ac- IV.
tually and intimately present and atten-
tive to all our Interests and Motions;
who watches over our Conduct, and takes
care of our minutest Actions and Designs,
throughout the whole course of our lives,
informing, admonishing, and directing
incessantly, in a most evident and sensi-
ble manner. This is truly wonderful.
EUPH. And is it not so, that Men
shou'd be encompassed by such a wonder,
without reflecting on it?

XV. Something there is of Divine and Admirable in this Language, addressed to our Eyes, that may well awaken the Mind, and deserve its utmost Attention; it is learned with so little pains, it expresseth the Differences of Things so clearly and aptly, it instructs with such Facility and Dispatch, by one Glance of the Eye conveying a greater Variety of Advices, and a more distinct Knowledge of Things, than cou'd be got by a Discourse of several Hours. And, while it informs, it amuses and entertains the Mind with such singular Pleasure and Delight. It is of such excellent Use in giving a Stability and Permanency to Humane Discourse, in recording Sounds and bestowing Life on dead Languages,

DIAL. guages, enabling us to converse with Men
IV. of remote Ages and Countries. And it
answers so apposite to the Uses and Neces-
sities of Mankind, informing us more
distinctly of those Objects, whose Nearness
and Magnitude qualify them to be of
greatest Detriment or Benefit to our Bodies,
and less exactly, in Proportion as their Lit-
tleness or Distance make them of less Con-
cern to us. *ALC.* And yet these strange
Things affect Men but little. *EUPH.*
But they are not strange, they are familiar,
and that makes them be overlooked.
Things which rarely happen strike; whereas
Frequency lessens the Admiration of
Things, though in themselves ever so ad-
mirable. Hence a common Man, who is
not used to think and make Reflexions,
wou'd probably be more convinced of the
Being of a God, by one single Sentence
heard once in his life from the Sky, than
by all the Experience he has had of this
visual Language, contrived with such
exquisite skill, so constantly addressed
to his Eyes, and so plainly declaring
the Nearness, Wisdom, and Providence
of him with whom we have to do.
ALC. After all, I cannot satisfy my self,
how Men shou'd be so little surprised or
amazed about this visive Faculty, if it
was really of a nature so surprising and
amazing.

amazing. *EUPH.* But let us suppose a *DIAL.*
Nation of Men blind from their Infancy,
among whom a Stranger arrives, the only
Man who can see in all the Country: Let
us suppose this Stranger travelling with
some of the Natives, and that one while
he foretells to them, that, in case they
walk straight forward, in half an Hour
they shall meet Men or Cattle or come
to a House; that if they turn to the right
and proceed, they shall in a few Minutes
be in danger of falling down a Precipice;
that shaping their course to the left, they
will in such a time arrive at a River, a
Wood, or a Mountain. What think you?
Must they not be infinitely surprised,
that one, who had never been in their
Country before, shou'd know it so much
better than themselves? And wou'd not
those Predictions seem to them as unac-
countable and incredible, as Prophecy to
a Minute Philosopher? *ALC.* I cannot
deny it. *EUPH.* But it seems to require
intense thought, to be able to unravel a
Prejudice that has been so long forming,
to get over the vulgar Error of Ideas
common to both Senses, and so to distin-
guish between the Objects of Sight and
Touch *, which have grown (if I may so

* See the annexed Treatise wherein this Point and the
whole Theory of Vision are more fully explained,

DIAL. say) blended together in our Fancy, as to
IV. be able to suppose our selves exactly in
the State, that one of those Men wou'd
be in, if he were made to see. And yet
this I believe is possible, and might seem
worth the pains of a little thinking, es-
pecially to those Men whose proper Em-
ployment and Profession it is to think, and
unravel Prejudices, and confute Mistakes.
I frankly own I cannot find my way out
of this Maze, and shou'd gladly be set
right by those who see better than my
self. C.R.I. The pursuing this Subject in
their own Thoughts wou'd possibly open
a new Scene, to those speculative Gen-
tlemen of the Minute Philosophy. It puts
me in mind of a passage in the Psalmist,
where he represents God to be covered
with Light as with a Garment, and wou'd
methinks be no ill Comment on that an-
cient Notion of some Eastern Sages: That
God had Light for his Body, and Truth
for his Soul. This Conversation lasted till
a Servant came to tell us the Tea was
ready: Upon which we walked in, and
found Lysicles at the Tea-table.

XVI. As soon as we sate down, I am
glad, said *Alciphron*, that I have here
found my Second, a fresh Man to main-
tain our common Cause, which, I doubt,

Lysicles

Lysicles will think hath suffered by his DIAL, absence. *LYS.* Why so? *ALC.* I have been drawn into some Concessions you won't like. *LYS.* Let me know what they are. *ALC.* Why, that there is such a thing as a God, and that his Existence is very certain. *LYS.* Bless me! How came you to entertain so wild a Notion? *ALC.* You know we profess to follow Reason wherever it leads. And in short I have been reasoned into it. *LYS.* Reasoned? You shou'd say amused with Words, bewildered with Sophistry. *EUPH.* Have you a mind to hear the same Reasoning that led *Alciphron* and me Step by Step, that we may examine whether it be Sophistry or no? *LYS.* As to that I am very easy. I gues all that can be said on that Head. It shall be my Busines to help my Friend out, whatever Arguments drew him in. *EUPH.* Will you admit the Premises and deny the Conclusions? *LYS.* What if I admit the Conclusion? *EUPH.* How! will you grant there is a God? *LYS.* Perhaps I may. *EUPH.* Then we are agreed. *LYS.* Perhaps not. *EUPH.* O *Lysicles*, you are a subtle Adversary. I know not what you wou'd be at. *LYS.* You must know then, that at bottom the Being of a God is a Point in it self of small consequence,

DIAL. and a Man may make this Concession
IV. without yielding much. The great Point
is what Sense the word God is to be taken
in. The very *Epicureans* allowed the Be-
ing of Gods; but then they were indolent
Gods, unconcerned with Humane Affairs.
Hobbes allowed a corporeal God; and *Spinoza* held the Universe to be God. And
yet no body doubts they were staunch
Free-thinkers. I cou'd wish indeed the
word God were quite omitted, because in
most minds it is coupled with a sort of
superstitious Aw, the very Root of all
Religion. I shall not, nevertheless, be
much disturbed though the name be re-
tained, and the Being of God allowed in
any Sense but in that of a Mind, which
knows all things, and beholds Humane
Actions, like some Judge or Magistrate
with infinite Observation and Intelligence.
The Belief of a God in this Sense fills a
Man's Mind with Scruples, lays him un-
der Constraints and imbibers his very Be-
ing: But in another Sense, it may be at-
tended with no great ill Consequence.
This I know was the Opinion of our
great *Diagoras*, who told me he wou'd
never have been at the pains, to find out
a Demonstration that there was no God,
if the received Notion of God had been
the same with that of some Fathers and
Schoolmen.

Schoolmen. EUPH. Pray what was DIAL.
that?

IV.

XVII. LYS. You must know, *Diagoras*, a Man of much reading and inquiry, had discovered that once upon a time, the most profound and speculative Divines finding it impossible to reconcile the Attributes of God, taken in the common Sense, or in any known Sense, with Humane Reason, and the Appearances of things, taught that the words Knowledge, Wisdom, Goodness, and such like, when spoken of the Deity, must be understood in a quite different Sense, from what they signify in the vulgar Acceptation, or from any thing that we can form a Notion of, or conceive. Hence, whatever Objections might be made against the Attributes of God they easily solved, by denying those Attributes belonged to God, in this or that or any known particular Sense or Notion; which was the same thing as to deny they belonged to him at all. And thus denying the Attributes of God they in effect deny'd his Being, though perhaps they were not aware of it. Suppose, for instance, a Man shou'd object, that future Contingencies were inconsistent with the Foreknowledge of God, because it is repugnant that certain Knowledge shou'd be of an uncertain thing: it was a ready and an easy an

DIAL. swer to say, that this may be true, with respect to Knowledge taken in the common Sense, or in any Sense that we can possibly form any Notion of; but that there wou'd not appear the same Inconsistency, between the contingent Nature of Things and Divine Foreknowledge, taken to signify somewhat that we know nothing of, which in God supplies the place of what we understand by Knowledge; from which it differs not in Quantity or Degree of Perfection, but altogether, and in kind, as Light doth from Sound; and even more, since these agree in that they are both Sensations: whereas Knowledge in God hath no sort of Resemblance or Agreement with any Notion, that Man can frame of Knowledge. The like may be said of all the other Attributes, which indeed may by this means be equally reconciled with every thing or with nothing: But all Men who think must needs see, this is cutting knots and not untying them. For how are things reconciled with the Divine Attributes, when these Attributes themselves are in every intelligible Sense denied; and consequently the very Notion of God taken away, and nothing left but the Name, without any meaning annexed to it? In short, the Belief that there is an unknown Subject of Attributes

Attributes absolutely unknown is a very DIAL.
innocent Doctrine; which the acute IV.
Diagoras well saw, and was therefore
wonderfully delighted with this System.

XVIII. For, said he, if this cou'd once make its way and obtain in the World, there wou'd be an end of all natural or rational Religion, which is the Basis both of the Jewish and the Christian: for he who comes to God, or enters himself in the Church of God, must first believe that there is a God in some intelligible Sense; and not only that there is something in general without any proper Notion, though never so inadequate, of any of its Qualities or Attributes; for this may be Fate, or Chaos, or Plastic Nature, or any thing else as well as God. Nor will it avail to say, there is something in this unknown Being analogous to Knowledge and Goodness; that is to say, which produceth those Effects, which we cou'd not conceive to be produced by Men in any Degree, without Knowledge and Goodness. For this is in Fact to give up the Point in dispute between Theists and Atheists, the Question having always been, not whether there was a Principle, (which Point was allowed by all Philosophers as well before as since

DIAL. *Anaxagoras*) but whether this Principle was
IV. a ^res, a thinking intelligent Being : That is
to say, whether that Order and Beauty and
Use, visible in Natural Effects, cou'd be
produced by any thing but a Mind or In-
telligence, in the proper Sense of the Word ;
and whether there must not be true, real,
and proper Knowledge in the first Cause.
We will therefore acknowledge, that all
those natural Effects which are vulgarly
ascribed to Knowledge and Wisdom, pro-
ceed from a Being in which there is,
properly speaking, no Knowledge or Wi-
dом at all, but only something else, which,
in reality, is the Cause of those things
which Men, for want of knowing better,
ascribe to what they call Knowledge and
Wisdom and Understanding. You wonder
perhaps to hear a Man of Pleasure, who
diverts himself as I do, philosophize at
this rate. But you shou'd consider that
much is to be got by conversing with in-
genious Men, which is a short way to
Knowledge, that saves a Man the drud-
gery of Reading and Thinking. And now
we have granted to you that there is a
God in this indefinite Sense, I wou'd fain
see what use you can make of this Con-
cession. You cannot argue from unknown
Attributes, or which is the same thing,
from Attributes in an unknown Sense.

You

You cannot prove, that God is to be loved DIAL.
for his Goodness, or feared for his Justice,
or respected for his Knowledge : All which
Consequences, we own, wou'd follow from
those Attributes admitted in an intelligible
Sense. But we deny, that those or any
other Consequences can be drawn from At-
tributes admitted in no particular Sense, or
in a Sense which none of us understand.
Since therefore nothing can be inferred
from such an Account of God, about Con-
science, or Worship, or Religion, you may
e'en make the best of it ; and, not to be
singular, we will use the Name too, and
so at once there is an end of Atheism.
EUPH. This Account of a Deity is new to
me. I do not like it, and therefore shall
leave it to be maintained by those who do.

XIX. *CRI.* It is not new to me. I re-
member not long since to have heard a
Minute Philosopher triumph upon this
very Point; which put me on inquiring
what Foundation there was for it in the
Fathers or Schoolmen. And, for ought
that I can find, it owes its Original to
those Writings, which have been pub-
lished under the Name of *Dionysius the*
Areopagite. The Author of which, it
must be owned, hath written upon the
Divine Attributes in a very singular Style.

In

DIAL. In his Treatise of the Cœlestial Hierarchy*
 IV. he faith, that God is something above all
 Essence and Life, ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν ὕστιαν καὶ ζωὴν ;
 and again in his Treatise of the Divine
 Names †, that he is above all Wisdom and
 Understanding, ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν σοφίαν καὶ σύνεσιν,
 ineffable and innominable, ἄρρητος καὶ
 ἀνώνυμος ; the Wisdom of God he terms an
 unreasonable, unintelligent, and foolish
 Wisdom ; τέλιος ἀλογον καὶ αὐτεν καὶ μωράν σοφίαν .
 But then the Reason he gives, for expres-
 sing himself in this strange manner, is,
 that the Divine Wisdom is the Cause of all
 Reason, Wisdom, and Understanding, and
 therein are contained the Treasures of all
 Wisdom and Knowledge. He calls God
 ὑπέρσοφος and ὑπέρζως ; as if Wisdom and
 Life were Words not worthy to express
 the Divine Perfections : And he adds, that
 the Attributes unintelligent and unper-
 ceiving must be ascribed to the Divinity,
 not κατ' ἔλλειψιν by way of Defect, but
 καθ' ὑπεροχὴν by way of Eminency ; which
 he explains by our giving the Name of
 Darkness to Light inaccessible. And, not-
 withstanding the Harshness of his Expres-
 sions in some Places, he affirms over and
 over in others, that God knows all Things ;
 not that he is beholden to the Creatures for
 his Knowledge, but by knowing himself,

* De Hierarch. Cœlest. c. 2.

† De Nom. Diy. c. 7.

from whom they all derive their Being, and in whom they are contained as in their Cause. It was late before these Writings appear to have been known in the World; and although they obtained Credit during the Age of the Schoolmen, yet since critical Learning hath been cultivated, they have lost that Credit, and are at this Day given up for spurious, as containing several evident Marks of a much later Date than the Age of *Dionysius*. Upon the whole, although this Method of growing in Expression, and dwindling in Notion, of clearing up Doubts by Nonsense, and avoiding Difficulties by running into affected Contradictions, may perhaps proceed from a well-meant Zeal; yet it appears not to be according to Knowledge, and instead of reconciling Atheists to the Truth, hath, I doubt, a Tendency to confirm them in their own Persuasion. It shou'd seem, therefore, very weak and rash in a Christian to adopt this harsh Language of an Apocryphal Writer, preferably to that of the Holy Scriptures. I remember, indeed, to have read of a certain Philosopher, who lived some Centuries ago, that used to say, if these supposed Works of *Dionysius* had been known to the Primitive Fathers, they wou'd have furnished them admirable Weapons against the

DIAL. the Hæretics, and wou'd have saved a
IV. world of Pains. But the Event since their

Discovery hath by no means confirmed his
Opinion. It must be owned, the cele-
brated *Picus of Mirandula*, among his Nine
Hundred Conclusions (which that Prince,
being very young, proposed to maintain
by public Disputation at *Rome*) hath this
for one; to wit, that it is more improper
to say of God, he is an Intellect or intelli-
gent Being, than to say of a reasonable
Soul that it is an Angel: Which Doctrine
it seems was not relished. And *Picus*,
when he comes to defend it, supports
himself altogether by the Example and
Authority of *Dionysius*, and in effect ex-
plains it away into a meer verbal Dif-
ference, affirming, that neither *Dionysius*
nor himself ever meant to deprive God of
Knowledge, or to deny that he knows all
Things: But that, as Reason is of kind
peculiar to Man, so by Intellec~~tion~~ he un-
derstands a kind or manner of Knowing
peculiar to Angels: And that the Know-
ledge, which is in God, is more above the
Intellec~~tion~~ of Angels, than Angel is above
Man. He adds that, as his Tenet consists
with admitting the most perfect Know-
ledge in God, so he wou'd by no means
be understood to exclude from the Deity
Intellec~~tion~~ itself, taken in the common

or

or general Sense, but only that peculiar DIAL.
sort of Intellection proper to Angels, which IV.
he thinks ought not to be attributed to
God any more than Humane Reason*.
Picus, therefore, though he speaks as the
Apocryphal *Dionysius*, yet when he ex-
plains himself, it is evident he speaks like
other Men. And although the foremen-
tioned Books of the Cœlestial Hierarchy
and of the Divine Names, being attribu-
ted to a Saint and Martyr of the Apostoli-
cal Age, were respected by the Schoolmen,
yet it is certain they rejected or softned his
harsh Expressions, and explained away or
reduced his Doctrine to the received No-
tions taken from Holy Scripture, and the
Light of Nature.

XX. *Thomas Aquinas* expresseth his Sense
of this Point in the following manner.
All Perfections, saith he, derived from
God to the Creatures are in a certain higher
Sense, or (as the Schoolmen term it) emi-
nently in God. Whenever, therefore, a
Name borrowed from any Perfection in the
Creature is attributed to God, we must ex-
clude from its Signification every thing
that belongs to the imperfect Manner,
wherein that Attribute is found in the
Creature. Whence he concludes, that

* Pic. Mirand. in Apolog. p. 155. Ed. Bas.

DIAL. Knowledge in God is not an Habit, but a
IV. pure Act*. And again the same Doctor
~~—~~ observes, that our Intellect gets its Notions
of all sorts of Perfections from the Crea-
tures, and that as it apprehends those Per-
fections, so it signifies them by Names.
Therefore, saith he, in attributing these
Names to God, we are to consider two
Things; first, The Perfections themselves
as Goodness, Life, and the like, which
are properly in God; and, secondly, The
Manner which is peculiar to the Creature,
and cannot, strictly and properly speaking,
be said to agree to the Creator †. And al-
though Suarez, with other Schoolmen,
teacheth, that the Mind of Man conceiv-
eth Knowledge and Will to be in God as
Faculties or Operations, by Analogy only
to created Beings; yet he gives it plainly
as his Opinion, that when Knowledge is
said not to be properly in God, it must be
understood in a Sense including Imperfec-
tion, such as discursive Knowledge, or the
like imperfect kind found in the Creatures:
And that, none of those Imperfections in
the Knowledge of Men or Angels belonging
to the formal Notion of Knowledge, or to
Knowledge as such, it will not thence follow
that Knowledge, in its proper formal Sense,

* Sum. Theolog. p. 1. Quest. 14. Art. 1.

† Ibid. Quest. 13. Art. 3.

may not be attributed to God: And of DIAL.
Knowledge taken in general for the clear IV.
evident understanding of all Truth, he ~~says~~
expressly affirms that it is in God, and that
this was never denied by any Philosopher
who believed a God *. It was, indeed, a
current Opinion in the Schools, that even
Being itself shou'd be attributed analogi-
cally to God and the Creatures. That is,
they held that God, the supreme, indepen-
dent, self-originate Cause and Source of all
Beings, must not be supposed to exist in
the same Sense with created Beings, not that
he exists less truly, properly, or formally
than they, but only because he exists in
a more eminent and perfect Manner.

XXI. But to prevent any Man's being
led, by mistaking the Scholastic Use of the
Terms *Analogy* and *Analogical*, into an
Opinion that we cannot frame in any De-
gree, a true and proper Notion of Attri-
butes applied by Analogy, or, in the School
Phrase, predicated analogically, it may
not be amiss to inquire into the true Sense
and Meaning of those Words. Every one
knows, that Analogy is a *Greek* Word used
by Mathematicians, to signify a Similitude
of Proportions. For Instance, when we
observe that Two is to Six, as Three is to

* Suarez Disp. Metaph. Tom. 2. Disp. 30. Sect. 15.

DIAL. Nine, this Similitude or Equality of Proportion is termed Analogy. And although Proportion strictly signifies the Habitude or Relation of one Quantity to another, yet, in a looser and translated Sense, it hath been applied to signify every other Habitude; and consequently the Term Analogy comes to signify all Similitude of Relations, or Habitudes whatsoever. Hence, the Schoolmen tell us there is Analogy between Intellect and Sight; forasmuch as Intellect is to the Mind, what Sight is to the Body? And that he who governs the State is analogous to him who steers a Ship. Hence a Prince is analogically styled a Pilot, being to the State as a Pilot is to his Vessel *. For the farther clearing of this Point it is to be observed, that a two-fold Analogy is distinguished by the Schoolmen, metaphorical and proper. Of the first Kind there are frequent Instances in Holy Scripture, attributing Humane Parts and Passions to God. When he is represented as having a Finger, an Eye, or an Ear, when he is said to repent, to be angry, or grieved, every one sees the Analogy is meerly metaphorical. Because those Parts and Passions, taken in the proper Signification, must in every Degree necessarily, and from the formal Nature of the

* Vide Cajetan. de Nom. Analog. c. 3.

Thing,

Thing, include Imperfection. When DIAL: therefore it is said, the Finger of God IV. appears in this or that Event, Men of common Sense mean no more, but that it is as truly ascribed to God, as the Works wrought by Humane Fingers are to Man: and so of the rest. But the case is different, when Wisdom and Knowledge are attributed to God. Passions and Senses as such imply Defect; but in Knowledge simply, or as such, there is no Defect. Knowledge therefore, in the proper formal meaning of the Word, may be attributed to God proportionably, that is preserving a Proportion to the infinite Nature of God. We may say, therefore, that as God is infinitely above Man, so is the Knowledge of God infinitely above the Knowledge of Man, and this is what *Cajetan* calls *Analogia propriè facta*. And after this same Analogy, we must understand all those Attributes to belong to the Deity, which in themselves simply, and as such, denote Perfection. We may therefore consistently with what hath been premised, affirm that all sorts of Perfection, which we can conceive in a finite Spirit, are in God, but without any of that alloy which is found in the Creatures. This Doctrine therefore of Analogical Perfections in

DIAL. God, or our knowing God by Analogy,
IV. seems very much misunderstood and
misapplied by those who wou'd infer
from thence, that we cannot frame any
direct or proper Notion, though never so
inadequate, of Knowledge or Wisdom, as
they are in the Deity, or understand any
more of them than one born blind can of
Light and Colours.

XXII. And now, Gentlemen, it may
be expected I shou'd ask your Pardon, for
having dwelt so long on a point of Meta-
physics, and introduced such unpolished
and unfashionable Writers as the School-
men into good Company: but as *Lysicles*
gave the occasion, I leave him to answer
for it. LY.S. I never dreamt of this dry
Dissertation. But, if I have been the
occasion of discussing these Scholastic
Points, by my unluckily mentioning the
Schoolmen, it was my first fault of the
kind, and I promise it shall be the last.
The meddling with crabbed Authors of
any sort is none of my taste. I grant one
meets now and then with a good Notion in
what we call dry Writers, such an one for
example as this I was speaking of, which I
must own struck my Fancy. But then
for these we have such as *Prodicus* or
Diagoras, who look into obsolete Books, and
I
save

save the rest of us that trouble. *CRI.* So DIAL.
you pin your Faith upon them. *LYS.* It IV.
is only for some odd Opinions, and matters
of Fact, and critical Points. Besides, we
know the Men to whom we give credit:
They are judicious and honest, and have
no end to serve but Truth. And I am
confident some Author or other has main-
tained the forementioned Notion in the
same Sense as *Diagoras* related it. *CRI.*
That may be. But it never was a received
Notion, and never will, so long as Men
believe a God; the same Arguments that
prove a first Cause proving an intelligent
Cause: Intelligent, I say, in the proper
Sense: Wise and Good in the true and
formal Acceptation of the Words. Other-
wise it is evident, that every Syllogism
brought to prove those Attributes, or
(which is the same thing) to prove the
Being of a God, will be found to consist
of four terms, and consequently can con-
clude nothing. But for your part, *Alci-*
phron, you have been fully convinced, that
God is a thinking Intelligent Being in the
same sense with other Spirits, though not
in the same imperfect manner or degree.

XXIII. *ALC.* And yet I am not with-
out my Scruples: For with Knowledge
you infer Wisdom, and with Wisdom

DIAL. Goodness. But how is it possible, to conceive God so good, and Man so wicked? It may perhaps with some Colour be alledged, that a little soft shadowing of Evil sets off the bright and luminous parts of the Creation, and so contributes to the Beauty of the whole Piece: But, for Blots so large and so black it is impossible to account by that Principle. That there shou'd be so much Vice and so little Virtue upon Earth, and that the Laws of God's Kingdom shou'd be so ill observed by his Subjects, is what can never be reconciled with that surpassing Wisdom and Goodness of the supreme Monarch. EUPH. Tell me, *Alciphron*, wou'd you argue that a State was ill admistred, or judge of the manners of its Citizens, by the Disorders committed in the Goal or Dungeon? ALC. I wou'd not. EUPH. And for ought we know, this Spot with the few Sinners on it, bears no greater Proportion to the Universe of Intelligences, than a Dungeon doth to a Kingdom. It seems we are led not only by Revelation but by common Sense, observing and inferring from the Analogy of visible Things, to conclude there are innumerable Orders of intelligent Beings more happy and more perfect than Man, whose Life is but a Span, and whose place this

this earthly Globe is but a Point, in DIAL.
respect of the whole System of God's IV.
Creation. We are dazzled indeed with the
Glory and Grandeur of Things here be-
low, because we know no better. But I
am apt to think, if we knew what it was
to be an Angel for one hour, we shou'd
return to this World, though it were to
sit on the brightest Throne in it, with
vaſtly more loathing and reluctance, than
we wou'd now descend into a loathſome
Dungeon or Sepulchre.

XXIV. CR. I. To me it seems natural,
that such a weak passionate and short-
ſighted Creature as Man, shou'd be ever
liable to Scruples of one kind or other.
But, as this same Creature is apt to be
over positive in judging, and over hasty in
concluding, it falls out, that these Dif-
ficulties and Scruples about God's Con-
duct are made Objections to his Being.
And so Men come to argue from their own
Defects against the Divine Perfections.
And, as the Views and Humours of Men
are different and often opposite, you may
sometimes see them deduce the same a-
theistical Conclusion from contrary Pre-
mises. I knew an Instance of this, in two
Minute Philosophers of my Acquaintance,
who used to argue each from his own

DIAL. Temper against a Providence. One of them, a Man of a choleric and vindictive Spirit, said he cou'd not believe a Providence, because *London* was not swallowed up or consumed by Fire from Heaven, the Streets being as he said full of People, who shew no other Belief or Worship of God, but perpetually praying that he wou'd damn, rot, sink, and confound them. The other, being of an indolent and easy Temper, concluded there cou'd be no such thing as a Providence, for that a Being of consummate Wisdom must needs employ himself better, than in minding the Prayers, and Actions, and little Interests of Mankind. *ALC.* After all, if God have no Passions, how can it be true that Vengeance is his? Or how can he be said to be jealous of his Glory? *CRI.* We believe that God executes Vengeance without Revenge, and is jealous without Weakness, just as the mind of Man sees without Eyes, and apprehends without Hands.

XXV. *ALC.* To put a Period to this Discourse, we will grant, there is a God in this dispassionate Sense; but what then? What hath this to do with Religion or Divine Worship? To what purpose, are all these Prayers, and Praises, and Thanks-

Thanksgivings, and Singing of Psalms, DIAL.
which the foolish Vulgar call serving IV.

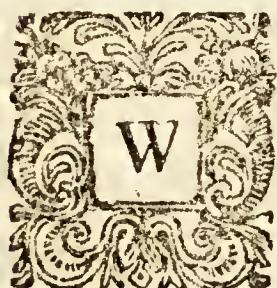
God? What sense or use or end is there
in all these things? *CRI.* We worship
God, we praise and pray to him: not
because we think that he is proud of our
Worship, or fond of our Praise or Prayers,
and affected with them as Mankind are,
or that all our Service can contribute in
the least Degree to his Happiness or Good:
But because it is good for us, to be so
disposed towards God: because it is just
and right and suitable to the Nature of
Things, and becoming the Relation we
stand in to our supreme Lord and Gover-
nor. *ALC.* If it be good for us to
worship God; it shou'd seem that the
Christian Religion, which pretends to
teach Men the Knowledge and Worship of
God, was of some use and benefit to
Mankind. *CRI.* Doubtless. *ALC.* If
this can be made appear, I shall own my
self very much mistaken. *CRI.* It is
now near Dinner time. Wherefore if you
please, we will put an end to this Con-
versation for the present, and to morrow
morning resume our Subject.

The FIFTH DIALOGUE.

- I. *Minute Philosophers join in the Cry, and follow the Scent of others.*
- II. *Worship prescribed by the Christian Religion suitable to God and Man.*
- III. *Power and Influence of the Druids.*
- IV. *Excellency and Usefulness of the Christian Religion.*
- V. *It ennobles Mankind, and makes them happy.*
- VI. *Religion neither Bigotry nor Superstition.*
- VII. *Physicians and Physic for the Soul.*
- VIII. *Character of the Clergy.*
- IX. *Natural Religion and Humane Reason not to be disparaged.*
- X. *Tendency and Use of the Gentile Religion.*
- XI. *Good Effects of Christianity.*
- XII. *Englishmen compared with ancient Greeks and Romans.*
- XIII. *The Modern Practice of Duelling.*
- XIV. *Character of the Old Romans, how to be formed.*
- XV. *Genuine Fruits of the Gospel.*
- XVI. *Wars and Factions not an Effect of the Christian Religion.*
- XVII. *Civil Rage and Massacres in Greece and Rome.*
- XVIII. *Virtue of ancient Greeks.*
- XIX. *Quarrels of Polemical Divines.*
- XX. *Tyranny, Usurpation, Sophistry of Ecclesiastics.*

siastics. XXI. The Universities censured. DIAL.
XXII. Divine Writings of a certain mo- V.
dern Critic. XXIII. Learning the Effect
of Religion. XXIV. Barbarism of the
Schools. XXV. Restauration of Learning
and polite Arts, to whom owing. XXVI.
Prejudice and Ingratitude of Minute
Philosophers. XXVII. Their Pretensions
and Conduct inconsistent. XXVIII. Men
and Brutes compared with respect to Reli-
gion. XXIX. Christianity the only Means
to establish Natural Religion. XXX.
Free-thinkers mistake their Talents; have a
strong Imagination. XXXI. Tithes and
Church-lands. XXXII. Men distinguished
from Humane Creatures. XXXIII. Dis-
tribution of Mankind into Birds, Beasts,
and Fishes. XXXIV. Plea for Reason
allowed, but Unfairness taxed. XXXV.
Freedom a Blessing or a Curse as it is
used. XXXVI. Priestcraft not the reign-
ing Evil.

I.



E amused ourselves next Day
every one to his Fancy, till
Nine of the Clock, when
Word was brought that the
Tea-table was set in the Li-
brary, which is a Gallery on a Ground-
floor, with an arched Door at one End
opening into a Walk of Limes; where, as
soon

DIAL. soon as we had drank Tea, we were
V. tempted by fine Weather to take a Walk
— which led us to a small Mount of easy
Ascent, on the Top whereof we found a
Seat under a spreading Tree. Here we had
a Prospect on one hand of a narrow Bay
or Creek of the Sea, inclosed on either
Side by a Coast beautified with Rocks and
Woods, and green Banks and Farm-houses.
At the End of the Bay was a small Town
placed upon the Slope of a Hill, which
from the Advantage of its Situation made
a considerable Figure. Several Fishing-
boats and Lighters gliding up and down
on a Surface as smooth and bright as
Glaſs enlivened the Prospect. On the
other Side we looked down on green Pa-
tures, Flocks, and Herds, basking beneath
in Sun-shine, while we in our superior Si-
tuation enjoy'd the Freshness of Air and
Shade. Here we felt that sort of joyful
Instinct which a rural Scene and fine Wea-
ther inspire; and proposed no small Plea-
sure, in resuming and continuing our Con-
ference without Interruption till Dinner:
But we had hardly seated ourselves, and
looked about us, when we saw a Fox run
by the Foot of our Mount into an adja-
cent Thicket. A few Minutes after, we
heard a confused Noise of the opening of
Hounds, the winding of Horns, and the
roaring

roaring of Country Squires. While our DIAL.
Attention was suspended by this Event, a V.
Servant came running out of Breath and told *Crito*, that his Neighbour *Ctesippus*, a Squire of Note, was fallen from his Horse attempting to leap over a Hedge, and brought into the Hall, where he lay for dead. Upon which we all rose and walked hastily to the House, where we found *Ctesippus* just come to himself, in the midst of half a dozen Sun-burnt Squires in Frocks and short Wigs and Jockey-Boots. Being asked how he did? he answered it was only a broken Rib. With some Difficulty *Crito* persuaded him to lie on a Bed till the Chirurgeon came. These Fox-hunters, having been up early at their Sport, were eager for Dinner, which was accordingly hastened. They passed the Afternoon in a loud rustic Mirth, gave Proof of their Religion and Loyalty by the Healths they drank, talked of Hounds and Horses and Elections and Country Affairs till the Chirurgeon, who had been employed about *Ctesippus*, desired he might be put into *Crito's* Coach, and sent home, having refused to stay all Night. Our Guests being gone, we repos'd ourselves after the Fatigue of this tumultuous Visit, and next Morning assembled again at the Seat on the Mount. Now *Lysicles*,
being

DIAL. being a nice Man, and a *bel esprit*,
V. had an infinite Contempt for the rough
~~ways~~ Manners and Conversation of Fox-hun-
ters, and cou'd not reflect with Pati-
ence that he had lost, as he called it, so
many Hours in their Company. I flat-
tered myself, said he, that there had been
none of this Species remaining among us :
Strange that Men shou'd be diverted with
such uncouth Noise and Hurry, or find
Pleasure in the Society of Dogs and Horses !
How much more elegant are the Diver-
sions of the Town ! There seems, replied
Euphranor, to be some Resemblance be-
tween Fox-hunters and Free-thinkers ; the
former exerting their animal Faculties in
pursuit of Game, as you Gentlemen em-
ploy your Intellectuals in the pursuit of
Truth. The kind of Amusement is the
same, although the Object be different.
LYS. I had rather be compared to any
Brute upon Earth than a rational Brute.
CRI. You wou'd then have been less dis-
pleased with my Friend *Pythocles*, whom
I have heard compare the common sort of
Minute Philosophers, not to the Hunters,
but the Hounds. For, said he, you shall
often see among the Dogs a loud Babler,
with a bad Nose, lead the unskilful part
of the Pack, who join all in his Cry with-
out following any Scent of their own, any
more.

more than the Herd of Free-thinkers fol- DIAL.
low their own Reason.

V.

II. But *Pythocles* was a blunt Man, and must never have known such Reasoners among them as you Gentlemen, who can sit so long at an Argument, dispute every Inch of Ground, and yet know when to make a reasonable Concession. *LYS.* I don't know how it comes to pass, but methinks *Alciphron* makes Concessions for himself and me too. For my own part, I am not altogether of such a yielding Temper: But yet I don't care to be singular neither. *CRI.* Truly, *Alciphron*, when I consider where we are got, and how far we are agreed, I conceive it probable we may agree altogether in the end. You have granted that a Life of Virtue is upon all Accounts eligible, as most conducive both to the general and particular Good of Mankind: And you allow, that the Beauty of Virtue alone is not a sufficient Motive with Mankind to the Practice of it. This led you to acknowledge, that the Belief of a God wou'd be very useful in the World; and that consequently you shou'd be dispos'd to admit any reasonable Proof of his Being: Which Point hath been proved, and you have admitted the Proof. If then we admit a Divinity, why not Divine

DIAL. Divine Worship? And if Worship, why
V. not Religion to teach this Worship? And
— if a Religion, why not the Christian, if
a better cannot be assigned, and it be
already established by the Laws of our
Country, and handed down to us from
our Fore-fathers? Shall we believe a God,
and not pray to him for future Benefits nor
thank him for the past? Neither trust in
his Protection, nor love his Goodness, nor
praise his Wisdom, nor adore his Power?
And if these Things are to be done, can
we do them in a Way more suitable to the
Dignity of God or Man, than is prescribed
by the Christian Religion? ALC. I am
not perhaps altogether sure that Religion
must be absolutely bad for the Public: But
I cannot bear to see Policy and Religion
walk hand in hand: I do not like to see
Humane Rights attached to the Divine:
I am for no *Pontifex Maximus*, such as in
ancient or in modern *Rome*: No High
Priest, as in *Judea*: No Royal Priests, as
in *Ægypt* and *Sparta*: No such Things as
Dairos of *Japan*, or *Lamas* of *Tartary*.

III. I knew a late witty Gentleman of
our Sect, who was a great Admirer of the
ancient *Druïds*. He had a mortal Antipa-
thy to the present established Religion, but
used to say he shou'd like well to see the
Druïds

Druïds and their Religion restored, as it DIAL.
anciently flourished in *Gaul* and *Britain*; V.
for it wou'd be right enough that there
shou'd be a Number of contemplative Men
set apart to preserve a Knowledge of Arts
and Sciences, to educate Youth, and teach
Men the Immortality of the Soul and the
moral Virtues. Such, said he, were the
Druïds of old, and I shou'd be glad
to see them once more established among
us. *CRI.* How wou'd you like, *Alci-*
phron, that Priests shou'd have Power to
decide all Controversies, adjudge Property,
distribute Rewards and Punishments; that
all who did not acquiesce in their Decrees
shou'd be excommunicated, held in Abhor-
rence, excluded from all Honours and Pri-
vileges, and deprived of the common Bene-
fit of the Laws; and that now and then,
a Number of Lay-men shou'd be cram-
med together in a Wicker-idol, and burnt
for an Offering to their Pagan Gods? How
shou'd you like living under such Priests and
such a Religion? *ALC.* Not at all. Such a
Situation wou'd by no means agree with
Free-thinkers. *CRI.* And yet such were
the *Druïds* and such their Religion, if we
may trust *Cæsar's* Account of them*. *LYS.*
I am now convinced more than ever, there
ought to be no such Thing as an established

* *De Bello Gallico*, l. 6.

DIAL. Religion of any kind. Certainly all the
V. Nations of the World have been hitherto
— out of their Wits. Even the *Athenians*
themselves, the wifest and freest People
upon Earth, had, I know not what, foolish
Attachment to their established Church.
They offered it seems a Talent as a Re-
ward to whoever shou'd kill *Diagoras* the
Melian, a Free-thinker of those Times
who derided their Mysteries: And *Prota-
goras*, another of the same Turn, narrow-
ly escaped being put to Death, for having
wrote something that seemed to contradict
their received Notions of the Gods. Such
was the Treatment our generous Sect met
with at *Athens*. And I make no doubt,
but these *Druids* wou'd have sacrificed
many a Holocaust of Free-thinkers. I
wou'd not give a single Farthing to ex-
change one Religion for another. Away
with all together, Root and Branch, or
you had as good do nothing. No *Druids*
or Priests of any sort for me: I see no oc-
casion for any of them.

IV. EUPH. What *Lyficles* faith puts
me in mind of the Close of our last Con-
ference, wherein it was agreed, in the fol-
lowing to resume the Point we were then
entered upon, to wit, the Use or Benefit
of the Christian Religion, which *Alciphron*
expected

expected *Crito* shou'd make appear. CRI. DIAL.

I am the readier to undertake this Point, V.

because I conceive it to be no difficult one,

and that one great Mark of the Truth of

Christianity is, in my mind, its Tendency

to do good, which seems the North Star to

conduct our Judgment in moral Mat-

ters, and in all Things of a practic Na-

ture; Moral or practical Truths being

ever connected with universal Benefit. But

to judge rightly of this Matter, we shou'd

endeavour to act like *Lysicles* upon another

Occasion, taking into our View the Sum

of Things, and considering Principles as

branched forth into Consequences to the

utmost Extent we are able. We are not

so much to regard the Humour or Caprice,

or imaginary Distresses of a few idle Men,

whose Conceit may be offended, though

their Conscience cannot be wounded; but

fairly to consider the true Interest of Indi-

viduals as well as of Humane Society.

Now the Christian Religion, considered as

a Fountain of Light, and Joy, and Peace,

as a Source of Faith, and Hope, and Cha-

rity, (and that it is so will be evident to

whoever takes his Notion of it from the

Gospel) must needs be a Principle of Hap-

piness and Virtue. And he who sees not,

that the destroying the Principles of good

Actions must destroy good Actions, sees

T

nothing:

DIAL. nothing: And he who, seeing this, shall
V. yet persist to do it, if he be not wicked,
 who is?

V. To me it seems the Man can see neither deep nor far, who is not sensible of his own Misery, Sinfulness, and Dependence; who doth not perceive, that this present World is not designed or adapted to make rational Souls happy; who wou'd not be glad of getting into a better State, and who wou'd not be overjoy'd to find, that the Road leading thither was the Love of God and Man, the practising every Virtue, the living reasonably while we are here upon Earth, proportioning our Esteem to the Value of Things, and so using this World as not to abuse it? For this is what Christianity requires. It neither enjoyns the Nastiness of the Cynic, nor the Insensibility of the Stoic. Can there be a higher Ambition than to overcome the World, or a wiser than to subdue ourselves, or a more comfortable Doctrine than the Remission of Sins, or a more joyful Prospect than that of having our base Nature renewed and assimilated to the Deity, our being made Fellow-citizens with Angels and Sons of God? Did ever *Pythagoreans*, or *Platonists*, or Stoics, even in Idea or in Wish, propose to the Mind of Man purer Means, or

or a nobler End? How great a Share of DIAL.
our Happiness depends upon Hope! How V.
totally is this extinguished by the Minute
Philosophy! On the other hand, how is it
cherished and raised by the Gospel! Let
any Man who thinks in earnest but consi-
der these Things, and then say which he
thinks deserveth best of Mankind, he who
recommends, or he who runs down Chri-
stianity? Which he thinks likelier to lead
a happy Life, to be a hopeful Son, an ho-
nest Dealer, a worthy Patriot, He who sin-
cerely believes the Gospel, or He who be-
lieves not one Tittle of it? He who aims
at being a Child of God, or He who is
contented to be thought, and to be, one of
Epicurus's Hogs? And in fact do but scan
the Characters, and observe the Behaviour
of the common sort of Men on both
sides: Observe and say which live most
agreeably to the Dictates of Reason? How
Things shou'd be, the Reason is plain;
how they are, I appeal to Fact.

VI. ALC. It is wonderful to observe
how Things change Appearance, as they
are viewed in different Lights, or by diffe-
rent Eyes. The Picture, *Crito*, that I form
of Religion is very unlike yours, when I con-
sider how it unmans the Soul, filling it with
absurd Reveries and slavish Fears; how it

DIAL. extinguishes the gentle Passions, inspiring
V. a Spirit of Malice, and Rage, and Perse-
cution: When I behold bitter Resentments
and unholy Wrath in those very Men,
who preach up Meekness and Charity to
others. CRI. It is very possible, that
Gentlemen of your Sect may think Reli-
gion a Subject beneath their Attention;
but yet it seems that whoever sets up for
opposing any Doctrine, shou'd know what
it is he disputes against. Know then, that
Religion is the virtuous Mean between In-
credulity and Superstition. We do. not
therefore contend for superstitious Fol-
lies, or for the Rage of Bigots. What
we plead for is Religion against Profane-
ness, Law against Confusion, Virtue against
Vice, the Hope of a Christian against the
Despondency of an Atheist. I will not
justify bitter Resentments and unholy
Wrath in any Man, much less in a Chri-
stian, and least of all in a Clergyman. But
if Sallies of Humane Passion shou'd some-
times appear even in the best, it will not
surprise any one who reflects on the Sar-
casms and ill Manners with which they
are treated by the Minute Philosophers.
For as Cicero somewhere observes, *Habet*
quendam aculeum Contumelia, quem pati pru-
dentes ac viri boni difficillime possunt. But
although you might sometimes observe par-
ticular

ticular Persons, professing themselves Christians, run into faulty Extremes of any kind through Passion and Infirmitie, while Infidels of a more calm and dispassionate Temper shall perhaps behave better. Yet these natural Tendencies on either side prove nothing, either in favour of Infidel Principles, or against Christian. If a Believer doth Evil it is owing to the Man not to his Belief. And if an Infidel doth good it is owing to the Man and not to his Infidelity.

VII. LYS. To cut this Matter short, I shall borrow an Allusion to Physic, which one of you made use of against our Sect. It will not be denied, that the Clergy pass for Physicians of the Soul, and that Religion is a sort of Medicine which they deal in and administer. If then Souls in great numbers are diseased and lost, how can we think the Physician skilful or his Physic good? It is a common Complaint, that Vice increases, and Men grow daily more and more wicked. If a Shepherd's Flock be diseased or unsound, who is to blame but the Shepherd, for neglecting or not knowing how to cure them? a Fig therefore for such Shepherds, such Physic, and such Physicians, who like other Mountebanks, with great Gravity

DIAL. vity and elaborate Harangues put off their
V. Pilis to the People, who are never the
better for them. EUPH. Nothing seems
more reasonable than this Remark, that
Men shou'd judge of a Physician, and his
Physic by its Effect on the Sick. But
pray, *Lysicles*, wou'd you judge of a Physi-
cian by those Sick, who take his Physic
and follow his Prescriptions, or by those
who do not? LYS. Doubtless by those who
do. EUPH. What shall we say then, if
great numbers refuse to take the Physick,
or instead of it take Poison of a direct
contrary Nature prescribed by others, who
make it their Business to discredit the Phy-
sician and his Medicines, to hinder Men
from using them, and to destroy their
Effect by Drugs of their own? Shall the
Physician be blamed for the miscarriage of
those People? LYS. By no means. EUPH.
By a parity of Reason shou'd it not follow,
that the Tendency of religious Doctrines
ought to be judged of by the Effects which
they produce, not upon all who hear them,
but upon those only who receive or be-
lieve them? LYS. It seems so. EUPH.
Therefore to proceed fairly, shall we not
judge of the Effects of Religion by the re-
ligious, of Faith by Believers, of Christia-
nity by Christians?

VIII. *LYS.* But I doubt these sincere *DIAL.*
Believers are very few. *EUPH.* But will V.
it not suffice to justify our Principles, if in
proportion to the Numbers which receive
them, and the degree of Faith with which
they are received, they produce good Ef-
fects. Perhaps the number of Believers
are not so few as you imagine; and if they
were, whose fault is that so much as of
those who make it their professed Endeav-
our to lessen that number? And who are
those but the Minute Philosophers? *LYS.*
*I tell you it is owing to the Clergy them-
selves, to the Wickedness and Corruption
of Clergymen.* *EUPH.* And who denies
but there may be Minute Philosophers even
among the Clergy? *CRI.* In so numerous
a Body it is to be presumed there are Men
of all sorts. But notwithstanding the cruel
Reproaches cast upon that Order by their
Enemies, an equal Observer of Men and
Things will, if I mistake not, be inclined
to think those Reproaches owing as much
to other Faults as those of the Clergy, es-
pecially if he considers the declamatory
manner of those who censure them.
EUPH. My Knowledge of the World is
too narrow for me to pretend to judge of
the Virtue and Merit and liberal Attain-
ments of Men in the several Professions.
Besides, I shou'd not care for the odious

DIAL. work of Comparison: But I may venture
V. to say, the Clergy of this Country where
— I live are by no means a disgrace to it: on
the contrary, the People seem much the
better for their Example and Doctrine.
But supposing the Clergy to be (what all
Men certainly are) Sinners and faulty;
supposing you might spy out here and there
among them even great Crimes and Vices,
what can you conclude against the Profes-
sion it self from its unworthy Professors,
any more than from the Pride, Pedantry,
and bad Lines of some Philosophers against
Philosophy, or of Lawyers against Law?

IX. It is certainly right to judge of Prin-
ciples from their Effects, but then we must
know them to be Effects of those Princi-
ples. It is the very Method I have obser-
ved, with respect to Religion and the Mi-
nute Philosophy. And I can honestly
aver, that I never knew any Man or Fa-
mily grow worse in proportion as they grew
religious: But I have often observed that
Minute Philosophy is the worst thing which
can get into a Family, the readiest way to
impoverish, divide and disgrace it. *ALC.*
By the same Method of tracing Causes
from their Effects, I have made it my
Observation, that the love of Truth, Vir-
tue, and the Happiness of Mankind are
specious

specious Pretexts, but not the inward Principles that set Divines at work : Else why shou'd they affect to abuse Humane Reason, to disparage natural Religion, to traduce the Philosophers as they universally do? *CRI.* Not so universally perhaps as you imagine. A Christian, indeed, is for confining Reason within its due Bounds ; and so is every reasonable Man. If we are forbid meddling with unprofitable Questions, vain Philosophy, and Science falsely so called, it cannot be thence inferred, that all Inquiries into profitable Questions, useful Philosophy, and true Science, are unlawful. A Minute Philosopher may indeed impute, and perhaps a weak Brother may imagine those Inferences, but Men of Sense will never make them. God is the common Father of Lights ; and all Knowledge really such, whether natural or revealed, is derived from the same Source of Light and Truth. To amass together Authorities upon so plain a Point wou'd be needless. It must be owned some Mens attributing too much to Humane Reason, hath, as is natural, made others attribute too little to it. But thus much is generally acknowledged, that there is a natural Religion, which may be discovered and proved by the light of Reason, to those who are capable of such Proofs. But it must be
withal

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DIAL. withal acknowledged, that Precepts and
V. Oracles from Heaven are incomparably
better suited to popular Improvement and
the good of Society, than the Reasonings
of Philosophers; and accordingly we do
not find, that natural or rational Religion
ever became the popular national Religion
of any Country.

X. *ALC.* It cannot be denied, that in
all Heathen Countries there have been re-
ceived under the colour of Religion, a
world of Fables and superstitious Rites.
But I question whether they were so absurd
and of so bad Influence as is vulgarly re-
presented, since their respective Legislators
and Magistrates must, without doubt, have
thought them useful. *CRI.* It were need-
less to inquire into all the Rites and No-
tions of the Gentile World. This hath
been largely done when it was thought ne-
cessary. And whoever thinks it worth
while may be easily satisfied about them.
But as to the Tendency and Usefulness of
the Heathen Religion in general, I beg
leave to mention a Remark of St. *Augu-*
stine's†, who observes that the Heathens
in their Religion had no Assemblies for
preaching, wherein the People were to be
instructed what Duties or Virtues the Gods

† *De civitate Dei l. 2.*

required,

required, no Place or Means to be taught DIAL.
what Persius * exhorts them to learn. V.

*Disciteque ô miseri, & causas cognoscite rerum,
Quid sumus, & quidnam victuri gignimur.—*

ALC. This is the true Spirit of the Party, never to allow a Grain of Use or Goodness to any thing out of their own Pale: But we have had learned Men who have done Justice to the Religion of the *Gentiles*.

CRI. We do not deny but there was something useful in the old Religions of *Rome* and *Greece*, and some other Pagan Countries. On the contrary, we freely own they produced some good Effects on the People: But then these good Effects were owing to the Truths contained in those false Religions, the truer therefore the more useful. I believe you will find it a hard Matter to produce any useful Truth, any moral Precept, any salutary Principle or Notion in any Gentile System, either of Religion or Philosophy, which is not comprehended in the Christian, and either enforced by stronger Motives, or supported by better Authority, or carried to a higher Point of Perfection.

XI. Consequently you wou'd have us think our selves a finer People than the an-

* Sat. 3.

cient

DIAL. cient Greeks or Romans. CRI. If by
V. finer you mean better, perhaps we are;
~~V.~~ and if we are not, it is not owing to the
Christian Religion, but to the want of it.
ALC. You say perhaps we are. I do not
pique my self on my reading: But shou'd
be very ignorant to be capable of being
imposed on in so plain a Point. What!
compare *Cicero* or *Brutus* to an *English*
Patriot, or *Seneca* to one of our Parsons!
Then that invincible Constancy and Vigour
of Mind, that disinterested and noble Vir-
tue, that adorable publick Spirit you so
much admire, are things in them so well
known, and so different from our Manners,
that I know not how to excuse your *per-
haps*. *Euphranor*, indeed, who passeth his
Life in this obscure Corner, may possibly
mistake the Characters of our Times, but
you who know the World, how cou'd you
be guilty of such a Mistake? CRI. O
Alciphron, I wou'd by no means detract
from the noble Virtue of ancient Heroes:
But I observe those great Men were not the
Minute Philosophers of their Times;
that the best Principles upon which they
acted are common to them with Christians,
of whom it wou'd be no difficult Matter
to assign many Instances, in every kind of
Worth and Virtue, publick or private,
equal to the most celebrated of the An-
cients.

cients. Though perhaps their Story might DIAL.
not have been so well told, set off with
such fine Lights and colourings of Style,
or so vulgarly known and considered by
every School-boy. But though it shou'd
be granted, that here and there a *Greek* or
Roman Genius, bred up under strict Laws
and severe Discipline, animated to public
Virtue by Statues, Crowns, Triumphal
Arches, and such Rewards and Monu-
ments of great Actions, might attain to a
Character and Fame beyond other Men,
yet this will prove only, that they had
more Spirit and lived under a civil Polity
more wisely ordered in certain points than
ours; Which advantages of Nature and
civil Institution will be no Argument for
their Religion or against ours. On the con-
trary, it seems an invincible Proof of the
Power and Excellency of the Christian Re-
ligion, that, without the help of those
civil Institutions and Incentives to Glory,
it shou'd be able to inspire a Phlegmatic
People with the noblest Sentiments, and
soften the rugged Manners of Northern
Boors into Gentleness and Humanity: and
that these good Qualities shou'd become
National, and rise and fall in proportion
to the Purity of our Religion, as it ap-
proaches to, or recedes from the Plan laid
down in the Gospel.

V.
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XII. To

DIAL.

V.

XII. To make a right Judgment of the Effects of the Christian Religion, let us take a survey of the prevailing Notions and Manners of this very Country where we live, and compare them with those of our Heathen Predecessors. *ALC.* I have heard much of the glorious Light of the Gospel, and shou'd be glad to see some Effects of it in my own dear Country, which, by the bye, is one of the most corrupt and profligate upon Earth, notwithstanding the boasted Purity of our Religion. But it wou'd look mean and diffident, to affect a Comparison with the barbarous Heathen, from whence we drew our Original : If you wou'd do honour to your Religion, dare to make it with the most renowned Heathens of Antiquity. *CR I.* It is a common Prejudice, to despise the present and over-rate remote Times and Things. Something of this seems to enter into the Judgments Men make of the *Greeks* and *Romans*. For though it must be allowed, those Nations produced some noble Spirits and great Patrons of Virtue: yet upon the whole, it seems to me they were much inferior in point of real Virtue and good Morals, even to this corrupt and profligate Nation, as you are now pleased to call it in dishonour to our Religion; however you may think fit

to

To characterize it, when you wou'd do DIAL.
honour to the Minute Philosophy. This, V.
I think, will be plain to any one, who
shall turn off his Eyes from a few shining
Characters, to view the general Manners
and Customs of those People. Their in-
solent treatment of Captives, even of the
highest Rank and softer Sex, their unna-
tural exposing of their own Children,
their bloody Gladiatorian Spectacles, com-
pared with the common Notions of
Englishmen, are to me a plain Proof, that
our Minds are much softened by Christia-
nity. Cou'd any thing be more unjust,
than the condemning a young Lady to
the most infamous Punishment and Death
for the guilt of her Father, or a whole
Family of Slaves, perhaps some hundreds
for a Crime committed by one? Or more
Abominable than their Bacchanals and
unbridled Lusts of every kind? which,
notwithstanding all that has been done by
Minute Philosophers to debauch the Na-
tion, and their successful Attempts on
some part of it, have not yet been match-
ed among us, at least not in every cir-
cumstance of Impudence and Effrontery.
While the *Romans* were poor, they were
temperate; but, as they grew rich, they
became luxurious to a degree that is hardly
believed or conceived by us. It cannot
be

DIAL. be denied, the old *Roman* Spirit was a
V. great one. But it is as certain, there have
been numberless Examples of the most re-
solute and clear Courage in *Britons*, and
in general from a Religious Cause. Upon
the whole, it seems an instance of the
greatest Blindness and Ingratitude, that we
do not see and own the exceeding great
Benefits of Christianity, which, to omit
higher considerations, hath so visibly
softened, polished, and embellished our
Manners.

XIII. *ALC.* O *Crito*, we are alarmed
at Cruelty in a foreign Shape, but over-
look it in a familiar one. Else how is it
possible that you shou'd not see the Inhu-
manity of that barbarous Custom of Duel-
ling, a thing avowed and tolerated and
even reputable among us? Or that seeing
this, you shou'd suppose our *Englishmen*
of a more gentle disposition than the old
Romans, who were altogether Strangers
to it? *CRI.* I will by no means make an
Apology for every *Goth* that walks the
Streets, with a determined purpose to
murder any Man who shall but spit in his
Face, or give him the Lye. Nor do I
think the Christian Religion is in the least
answerable, for a practice so directly op-
posite to its Precepts, and which obtains
only

only among the idle part of the Nation, DIAL.
your Men of Fashion; who, instead of V.
Law, Reason or Religion, are governed ~~by~~
by Fashion. Be pleased to consider that
what may be, and truly is, a most scanda-
lous reproach to a Christian Country, may be
none at all to the Christian Religion: For
the Pagan encouraged Men in several Vi-
ces, but the Christian in none. ALC.
Give me leave to observe, that what you
now say is foreign to the purpose. For
the question, at present, is not concerning
the respective tendencies of the Pagan and
the Christian Religions, but concerning
our Manners, as actually compared with
those of ancient Heathens, who I aver
had no such barbarous Custom as Duel-
ling. CRI. And I aver that, bad as this
is, they had a worse; and that was Poi-
soning. By which we have reason to
think there were many more Lives destroy-
ed, than by this Gothic Crime of Duel-
ling: Inasmuch as it extended to all Ages,
Sexes, and Characters, and as its Effects
were more secret and unavoidable; and as
it had more Temptations, Interest as well
as Passion, to recommend it to wicked
Men. And for the Fact, not to waste
time, I refer you to the *Roman* Authors
themselves. LYR. It is very true: Duel-
ling is not so general a Nuisance as Poison
U ing,

DIAL. ing, nor of so base a Nature. This Crime,
V. if it be a Crime, is in a fair way to keep
~~the~~ its ground in spight of the Law and the
Gospel. The Clergy never preach against
it, because themselves never suffer by it:
and the Man of honour must not appear
against the means of vindicating Honour.
CRI. Though it be remarked by some of
your Sect, that the Clergy are not used to
preach against Duelling, yet I neither
think the Remark it self just, nor the
Reason assigned for it. In effect, one half
of their Sermons, all that is said of Cha-
rity, Brotherly Love, Forbearance, Meek-
ness, and Forgiving Injuries is directly a-
gainst this wicked Custom; by which the
Clergy themselves are so far from never
suffering, that perhaps they will be found,
all things considered, to suffer oftner than
other Men. LYS. How do you make
this appear? CRI. An Observer of Man-
kind may remark two kinds of Bully, the
Fighting and the Tame, both public
Nusances, the former (who is the more
dangerous Animal, but by much the less
common of the two) employs himself
wholly and solely against the Laity,
while the tame Species exert their Ta-
lents upon the Clergy. The Qualities
constituent of this tame Bully are natural
Rudeness joined with a delicate sense of
Danger.

Danger. For, you must know, the force DIAL.
of inbred Insolence and ill Manners is not V.
diminished, though it acquire a new De-
termination, from the fashionable custom
of calling Men to account for their Beha-
viour. Hence you may often see one of
these tame Bullies ready to burst with
Pride and ill Humour, which he dares not
vent till a Parson has come in the way
to his Relief. And the Man of Raillery,
who wou'd as soon bite off his Tongue,
as break a jest on the profession of Arms
in the presence of a military Man, shall
instantly brighten up, and assume a fami-
liar Air with Religion and the Church
before Ecclesiastics. *Dorcon*, who passes for
a Poltron and stupid in all other Company,
and really is so, when he is got among
Clergymen, affects a quite opposite Cha-
racter. And many *Dorcons* there are,
which owe their Wit and Courage to this
Passive Order.

XIV. *ALC.* But, to return to the
point in hand, can you deny, the old
Romans were as famous for Justice and
Integrity, as Men in these days for the
contrary Qualities? *CRI.* The Character
of the *Romans* is not to be taken from the
Sentiments of *Tully*, or *Cato's* Actions, or
a shining passage here and there in their

DIAL. History, but from the prevailing tenor of
V. their Lives and Notions. Now if they
and our modern *Britons* are weighed in
this same equal balance, you will, if I
mistake not, appear to have been preju-
diced in favour of the old *Romans* against
your own Country, probably because it
professeth Christianity. Whatever instances
of Fraud or Injustice may be seen in
Christians carry their own censure with
them, in the care that is taken to conceal
them, and the shame that attends their
discovery. There is, even at this day, a
sort of Modesty in all our public Coun-
cils and Deliberations. And I believe,
the boldest of our Minute Philosophers
wou'd hardly undertake in a popular As-
sembly, to propose any thing parallel to
the Rape of the *Sabines*, the most unjust
usage of *Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus*,
or the ungrateful treatment of *Ca-
millus*, which, as a learned Father ob-
serves, were instances of Iniquity agreed
to by the public body of the *Romans*. And
if *Rome* in her early days were capable of
such flagrant Injustice, it is most certain
she did not mend her Manners, as she
grew great in Wealth and Empire, having
produced Monsters in every kind of
Wickedness, as far exceeding other Men,
as they surpassed them in power. I freely
acknow-

acknowledge, the Christian Religion hath DIAL.
not had the same influence upon the Na- V.
tion, that it wou'd in case it had been always
professed in its Purity, and cordially be-
lieved by all Men. But I will venture to
say, that if you take the *Roman History*
from one end to the other, and impar-
tially compare it with our own, you will
neither find them so good, nor your
Countrymen so bad as you imagine. On
the contrary an indifferent Eye may, I
verily think, perceive a vein of Charity
and Justice, the effect of Christian Prin-
ciples, run through the latter; which,
though not equally discernible in all parts,
yet discloseth it self sufficiently to make a
wide difference upon the whole in spight
of the general Appetites and Passions of
Humane Nature, as well as of the parti-
cular hardness and roughness of the block
out of which we were hewn. And it is
observable (what the *Roman Authors* them-
selves do often suggest) that, even their
Virtues and magnanimous Actions rose
and fell with a sense of Providence, and
a future State, and a Philosophy the
nearest to the Christian Religion.

XV. *Crito* having spoke thus, paused.
But *Alciphron* addressing himself to *Euphranor* and me, said, It is natural for

DIAL. Men, according to their several Educations and Prejudices, to form contrary Judgments upon the same things, which they view in very different lights. *Crito*, for instance, imagines that none but Salutary Effects proceed from Religion: on the other hand, if you appeal to the general Experience and Observation of other Men, you shall find it grown into a Proverb that Religion is the root of evil.

Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum.

And this not only among *Epicureans* or other ancient Heathens, but among Moderns speaking of the Christian Religion. Now methinks it is unreasonable to oppose against the general concurring Opinion of the World, the Observation of a particular Person, or particular set of Zealots, whose Prejudice sticks close to them, and ever mixeth with their Judgment; and who read, collect, and observe with an Eye not to discover the Truth, but to defend their Prejudice. CRI. Though I cannot think with *Alciphron*, yet I must own, I admire his Address and Dexterity in Argument. Popular and general Opinion is by him represented, on certain occasions, to be a sure mark of Error. But when it serves his ends that it shou'd seem otherwise, he can as easily make it a

Chas-

Character of Truth. But it will by no means follow, that a profane Proverb used by the Friends and admired Authors of a Minute Philosopher, must therefore be a received Opinion, much less a Truth grounded on the Experience and Observation of Mankind. Sadness may spring from Guilt or Superstition, and Rage from Bigotry, but Darkness might as well be supposed the natural Effect of Sunshine, as fullen and furious Passions to proceed from the glad Tidings and divine Precepts of the Gospel. What is the Sum and Substance, Scope and End of Christ's Religion, but the Love of God and Man? To which all other Points and Duties are relative and subordinate, as Parts or Means, as Signs, Principles, Motives, or Effects. Now I wou'd fain know, how it is possible for Evil or Wickedness of any kind to spring from such a source. I will not pretend, there are no evil Qualities in Christians, nor good in Minute Philosophers. But this I affirm, that whatever evil is in us, our Principles certainly lead to Good; and whatever good there may be in you, it is most certain your Principles lead to evil.

XVI. *ALC.* It must be owned there is a fair outside, and many plausible things.

U 4

may

DIAL. be said, for the Christian Religion taken
V. simply as it lies in the Gospel. But it is
the Observation of one of our great
Writers, that the first Christian Preachers
very cunningly began with the fairest Face
and the best moral Doctrines in the World.
It was all Love, Charity, Meekness, Pa-
tience and so forth. But when by this
means they had drawn over the World
and got Power, they soon changed their
Appearance, and shewed Cruelty, Ambi-
tion, Avarice and every bad quality. C.R.I.
That is to say some Men very cunningly
preached and underwent a world of hard-
ships, and laid down their lives to propa-
gate the best Principles and the best
Morals, to the end that others some Cen-
turies after might reap the benefit of bad
ones. Whoever may be cunning, there is
not much Cunning in the maker of this
Observation. A.L.C. And yet ever since
this Religion hath appeared in the World,
we have had eternal Feuds, Factions, Mas-
sacres and Wars, the very reverse of that
Hymn with which it is introduced in the
Gospel: *Glory be to God on high, on Earth
Peace, Good-will towards Men.* C.R.I. This
I will not deny. I will even own that the
Gospel and the Christian Religion have
been often the Pretexts for these Evils; but
it will not thence follow they were the
Cause.

Cause. On the contrary it is plain they DIAL.
cou'd not be the real proper Cause of these V.
Evils, because a rebellious, proud, revenge-
ful, quarrelsome Spirit is directly op-
posite to the whole Tenor and most
express Precepts of Christianity: a Point
so clear that I shall not prove it. And
secondly, because all those Evils you men-
tion were as frequent, nay, much more
frequent, before the Christian Religion
was known in the World. They are the
common Product of the Passions and
Vices of Mankind, which are sometimes
covered with the Masque of Religion by
wicked Men, having the Form of Godli-
ness without the Power of it. This Truth
seems so plain, that I am surprised how any
Man of Sense, Knowledge, and Candour
can make a doubt of it.

XVII. Take but a view of Heathen *Rome*; what a Scene is there of Faction and Fury and civil Rage? Let any Man consider the perpetual Feuds between the *Patricians* and *Plebeians*, the bloody and inhumane Factions of *Marius* and *Sylla*, *Cinna* and *Oetavius*, and the vast havoc of Mankind, during the two famous Triumvirates. To be short, let any Man of common Candour and common Sense but cast an Eye, from one end to the other of the *Roman Story*, and behold that long

DIAL. long Scene of Seditions, Murders, Massacres,
V. Proscriptions and Desolations of every kind,
enhansed by every cruel circumstance of
Rage, Rapine and Revenge, and then say,
whether those Evils were introduced into
the World with the Christian Religion,
or whether they are not less frequent
now than before? ALC. The ancient
Romans, it must be owned, had a high
and fierce Spirit, which produced eager
Contentions and very bloody Catastrophes.
The *Greeks*, on the other hand, were a
polite and gentle sort of Men, softened
by Arts and Philosophy. It is impossible
to think of the little States and Cities of
Greece, without wishing to have lived in
those times, without admiring their Po-
licy and envying their Happiness. CRI.
Men are apt to consider the dark sides of
what they possess, and the bright ones of
things out of their reach. A fine Cli-
mate, elegant Taste, polite Amusements,
love of Liberty, and a most ingenious
inventive Spirit for Arts and Sciences were
indisputable Prerogatives of ancient *Greece*.
But as for Peace and Quietness, Gentle-
ness and Humanity, I think we have
plainly the advantage: For those envied
Cities composed of gentle *Greeks* were
not without their Factions, which perse-
cuted each other with such Treachery,
Rage,

Rage, and Malice, that in respect of them DIAL.
our factious Folk are meer Lambs. To be V.
convinced of this Truth, you need only
look into *Thucydides**, where you will find
those Cities in general involved in such
bitter Factions, as for Fellow-Citizens
without the formalities of War, to mur-
der one another, even in their Senate-
houses and their Temples, no regard be-
ing had to Merit, Rank, Obligation, or
Nearness of Blood. And if Humane Na-
ture boiled up to so vehement a pitch in
the politest People, what wonder that fa-
vage Nations shou'd scalp, roast, torture,
and destroy each other, as they are known
to do? It is therefore plain, that without
Religion there wou'd not be wanting Pre-
texts for Quarrels and Debates; all which
can very easily be accounted for by the
natural Infirmities and Corruption of Men.
It wou'd not perhaps be so easy to account
for the Blindness of those, who impute
the most hellish Effects to the most divine
Principle, if they cou'd be supposed in ear-
nest, and to have considered the Point. One
may daily see ignorant and prejudiced Men
make the most absurd Blunders: But that
Free-thinkers, Divers to the Bottom of
Things, Fair Inquirers, and Openers of
Eyes should be capable of such a gross
Mistake, is what one would not expect.

XVIII.

* Thucyd. l. 3.

DIAL. XVIII. *ALC.* The rest of Mankind
V. we cou'd more easily give up: but as for
the Greeks, Men of the most refined Ge-
nius express an high esteem of them, not
only on account of those Qualities which
you think fit to allow them, but also for
their Virtues. *CRI.* I shall not take up
on me to say how far some Men may be
prejudiced against their Country, or whe-
ther others may not be prejudiced in
favour of it. But upon the fullest and
most equal Observation that I am able to
make, it is my opinion, that, if by Vir-
tue is meant Truth, Justice, Gratitude,
there is incomparably more Virtue, now
at this day in *England*, than at any time
cou'd be found in ancient *Greece*. Thus
much will be allowed, that we know few
Countries, if any, where Men of eminent
Worth, and famous for deserving well of
the Public, met with harder Fate, and
were more ungratefully treated than in the
most polite and learned of the *Grecian*
States. Though *Socrates* it must be owned
wou'd not allow, that those Statesmen,
by adorning the City, augmenting the
Fleet, or extending the Commerce of
Athens, deserved well of their Country; or
cou'd with justice complain of the un-
grateful Returns made by their Fellow-
Citizens, whom, while they were in power,
they

they had taken no care to make better DIAL.
Men, by improving and cultivating their V.
Minds with the Principles of Virtue, —
which if they had done, they needed not
to have feared their Ingratitude. If I
were to declare my opinion, what gave
the chief Advantage to *Greeks* and *Roms* and other Nations, which have made
the greatest Figure in the World, I shou'd
be apt to think it was a peculiar Reve-
rence for their respective Laws and Insti-
tutions, which inspired them with Steadi-
ness and Courage, and that hearty gene-
rous Love of their Country, by which they
did not meerly understand a certain Lan-
guage or Tribe of Men, much less a par-
ticular spot of Earth, but included a cer-
tain System of Manners, Customs, No-
tions, Rites, and Laws Civil and Reli-
gious. *ALC.* Oh ! I perceive your Drift,
you wou'd have us reverence the Laws
and Religious Institutions of our Coun-
try. But herein we beg to be excused, if
we do not think fit to imitate the *Greeks*,
or to be governed by any Authority what-
soever. But to return : As for Wars and
Factions, I grant they ever were and ever
will be in the World upon some pretext
or other, as long as Men are Men.

DIAL. XIX. But there is a sort of War and
V. Warriors peculiar to Christendom, which
the Heathens had no notion of: I mean
Disputes in Theology and Polemical Di-
vines, which the World hath been won-
derfully pestered with: these Teachers
of Peace, Meekness, Concord, and what
not! if you take their word for it: But,
if you cast an eye upon their Practice,
you find them to have been in all Ages
the most contentious, quarrelsome, dis-
agreeing Crew that ever appeared upon
Earth. To observe the Skill and Sophi-
stry, the Zeal and Eagernes, with which
those Barbarians, the School Divines,
split Hairs and contest about Chimæ-
ra's, gives me more Indignation, as being
more absurd and a greater scandal to hu-
mane Reason, than all the ambitious In-
trigues, Cabals, and Politicks of the Court
of *Rome*. C.R.I. If Divines are quarrel-
some, that is not so far forth as Divine,
but as Undivine and Unchristian. Justice
is a good thing; and the Art of Healing
is excellent; nevertheless in the admini-
string of Justice or Physic Men may be
wronged or poisoned. But as Wrong can-
not be Justice, or the Effect of Justice, so
Poison cannot be Medicine or the Effect of
Medicine, so neither can Pride or Strife be
Religion or the effect of Religion, Ha-
ving

ving premised this, I acknowledge, you DIAL.
may often see hot-headed Bigots engage
themselves in religious as well as civil Par-
ties, without being of credit or service to
either. And as for the Schoolmen in par-
ticular, I do not in the least think the
Christian Religion concerned in the De-
fence of them, their Tenets, or their Me-
thod of handling them: but, whatever
futility there may be in their Notions,
or inelegancy in their Language, in pure
justice to Truth one must own, they nei-
ther banter nor rail nor declaim in their
Writings, and are so far from shewing
Fury or Passion, that perhaps an impartial
Judge will think, the Minute Philosophers
are by no means to be compared with
them, for keeping close to the Point, or
for Temper and good Manners. But after
all, if Men are puzzled, wrangle, talk
nonsense, and quarrel about Religion, so
they do about Law, Physic, Politics, and
every thing else of moment. I ask whe-
ther in these Professions, or in any other,
where men have refined and abstracted,
they do not run into Disputes, Chicane,
Nonsense, and Contradictions, as well as
in Divinity? And yet this doth not hinder
but there may be many excellent Rules,
and just Notions, and useful Truths in all
those Professions. In all Disputes humane
Pas-

DIAL. Passions too often mix themselves, in proportion as the Subject is conceived to be more or less important. But we ought not to confound the Cause of Men with the Cause of God, or make Humane Follies an Objection to Divine Truths. It is easy to distinguish what looks like Wisdom from above, and what proceeds from the passion and weakness of Men. This is so clear a Point, that one wou'd be tempted to think, the not doing it was an Effect, not of Ignorance, but, of something worse.

XX. The Conduct we object to Minute Philosophers is a natural consequence of their Principles. Whatsoever they can reproach us with is an Effect, not of our Principles, but of Human Passion and Frailty. *ALC.* This is admirable. So we must no longer object to Christians the absurd Contentions of Councils, the Cruelty of Inquisitions, the Ambition and Usurpations of Churchmen. *CRI.* You may object them to Christians but not to Christianity. If the Divine Author of our Religion and his Disciples have sowed a good Seed; and together with this good Seed, the Enemies of his Gospel (among whom are to be reckoned the Minute Philosophers of all Ages) have sowed bad Seeds, whence spring Tares and Thistles; is it not evident

dent, these bad Weeds cannot be imputed to the good Seed, or to those who sowed it? Whatever you do or can object against Ecclesiastical Tyranny, Usurpation, or Sophistry, may, without any blemish or disadvantage to Religion, be acknowledged by all true Christians; provided still that you impute those wicked Effects to their true Cause, not blaming any Principles or Persons for them, but those that really produce or justify them. Certainly, as the Interests of Christianity are not to be supported by unchristian Methods, whenever these are made use of, it must be supposed there is some other latent Principle which sets them at work. If the very Court of *Rome* hath been known, from Motives of Policy, to oppose settling the Inquisition in a Kingdom, where the secular Power hath endeavoured to introduce it in spight of that Court*: We may well suppose, that elsewhere Factions of State, and Political Views of Princes, have given birth to Transactions seemingly religious, wherein at bottom neither Religion, nor Church, nor Churchmen, were at all consider'd. As no Man of common Sense and Honesty will engage in a general Defence of Ecclesiastics, so I think no Man of common Candour can condemn

* P. Paolo istoria dell' Inquisizione p. 42.

DIAL. them in general. Wou'd you think it reasonable, to blame all Statesmen, Lawyers, or Soldiers, for the Faults committed by those of their Profession, though in other Times, or in other Countries, and influenced by other Maxims and other Discipline? And if not, why do you measure with one Rule to the Clergy, and another to the Laity? Surely the best Reason that can be given for this is Prejudice. Shou'd any Man rake together all the Mischiefs that have been committed in all Ages and Nations, by Soldiers and Lawyers, you wou'd, I suppose, conclude from thence, not that the State shou'd be deprived of those useful Professions, but only that their Exorbitances shou'd be guarded against and punished. If you took the same equitable Course with the Clergy, there wou'd indeed be less to be said against you; but then you wou'd have much less to say. This plain obvious Consideration, if every one who read considered, wou'd lessen the Credit of your Declaimers. *ALC.* But when all is said that can be said, it must move a Man's Indignation to see reasonable Creatures, under the Notion of Study and Learning, employ'd in reading and writing so many voluminous Tracts, *de lanâ caprinâ.* *CRI.* I shall not undertake the Vindication of Theological Writings,

a general Defence, being as needless as a DIAL.
general Charge is groundless. Only let
them speak for themselves ; and let no Man
condemn them upon the Word of a Mi-
nute Philosopher. But we will imagine
the very worst, and suppose a wrangling
Pedant in Divinity disputes and ruminates
and writes upon a refined Point, as useless
and unintelligible as you please. Suppose
this same Person bred a Layman, might
he not have employ'd himself in tricking
Bargains, vexatious Law-suits, Factions,
Seditions, and such like Amusements, with
much more Prejudice to the Publick ?
Suffer then curious Wits to spin Cobwebs;
where is the hurt ? *ALC.* The Mischief
is, what Men want in light they common-
ly make up in Heat : Zeal, and ill Nature,
being Weapons constantly exerted by the
Partisans, as well as Champions, on either
Side : And those perhaps not mean Pedants
or Book-worms. You shall often see even
the learned and eminent Divine lay him-
self out in explaining Things inexplica-
ble, or contend for a barren Point of The-
ory, as if his Life, Liberty, or Fortune
were at stake. *CRI.* No doubt all Points
in Divinity are not of equal Moment.
Some may be too fine spun, and others
have more Stress laid on them than they

DIAL. deserve. Be the Subject what it will, you
V. shall often observe that a Point by being
~~overlooked~~ controverted, singled out, examined, and
nearly inspected, groweth considerable to
the same Eye, that, perhaps, wou'd have
overlooked it in a large and comprehensive
View. Nor is it an uncommon thing, to
behold Ignorance and Zeal united in Men,
who are born with a Spirit of Party,
though the Church or Religion have in
Truth but small Share in it. Nothing is
easier than to make a *Caricatura* (as the
Painters call it) of any Profession upon
Earth: But at bottom, there will be found
nothing so strange in all this Charge upon
the Clergy, as the Partiality of those who
censure them, in supposing the common
Defects of Mankind peculiar to their Or-
der, or the Effect of religious Principles.

ALC. Other Folks may dispute or squab-
ble as they please, and no Body mind
them; but it seems, these venerable Squab-
bles of the Clergy pass for Learning, and
interest Mankind. To use the Words of
the most ingenious Characterizer of our
Times, "A Ring is made, and Readers ga-
ther in abundance. Every one takes
Party and encourages his own Side. This
shall be my Champion! This Man for
my Money! Well hit on our Side! Again

"a

" a good Stroke! There he was even with DIAL."

" him! Have at him the next Bout! EX- V.

" cellent Sport!"* CRI. Methinks I trace

the Man of Quality and Breeding in this delicate Satyr, which so politely ridicules those Arguments, Answers, Defences, and Replications which the Press groans under.

ALC. To the infinite waste of Time and Paper, and all the while no Body is one whit the wiser. And who indeed can be the wiser for reading Books upon Subjects quite out of the way, incomprehensible, and most wretchedly written? What Man of Sense or Breeding wou'd not abhor the Infection of prolix Pulpit Eloquence, or of that dry, formal, pedantic, stiff, and clumsy Style which smells of the Lamp and the College.

XXI. They who have the Weakness to reverence the Universities as Seats of Learning, must needs think this a strange Reproach; but it is a very just one. For the most ingenious Men are now agreed, that they are only Nurseries of Prejudice, Corruption, Barbarism, and Pedantry.

LYS. For my part, I find no Fault with Universities. All I know is, that I had the spending three hundred Pounds a Year

* Characteristics, Vol. III. c. 2.

DIAL. in one of them, and think it the chearfullest time of my Life. As for their Books

V. and Style I had not leisure to mind them.

CRI. Whoever hath a mind to weed will never want work ; and he that shall pick out bad Books on every Subject will soon fill his Library. I do not know what Theological Writings *Alciphron* and his Friends may be conversant in ; but I will venture to say, one may find among our English Divines many Writers, who for compass of Learning, weight of Matter, Strength of Argument, and Purity of Style, are not inferior to any in our Language. It is not my Design to apologize for the Universities : whatever is amiss in them (and what is there perfect among Men ?) I heartily wish amended. But I dare affirm, because I know it to be true, that any impartial Observer, although they shou'd not come up to what in Theory he might wish or imagine, will nevertheless find them much superior to those that in Fact are to be found in other Countries, and far beyond the mean Picture that is drawn of them by Minute Philosophers. It is natural for those to rail most at Places of Education, who have profited least by them. Weak and fond Parents will also readily impute to a wrong Cause, those

Cor-

Corruptions themselves have occasion'd, DIAL.
by allowing their Children more Money V.
than they knew how to spend innocently. —
And too often a Gentleman who has been
idle at the College, and kept idle Com-
pany, will judge of a whole University
from his own Cabal. *ALC.* *Crito* mi-
stakes the Point. I vouch the Authority,
not of a Dunce or a Rake or absurd Pa-
rent, but of the most consummate Critic
this Age has produced. This great Man cha-
racterizeth Men of the Church and Uni-
versities with the finest Touches and most
masterly Pencil. What do you think he
calls them? *EUPH.* What? *ALC.* Why,
the black Tribe, Magicians, Formalists,
Pedants, bearded Boys, and, having suf-
ficiently derided and exploded them and
their mean ungenteel Learning, he sets
most admirable Models of his own for
good Writing: And it must be acknow-
ledged they are the finest things in our
Language; as I cou'd easily convince you,
for I am never without something of that
noble Writer about me. *EUPH.* He is
then a noble Writer. *ALC.* I tell you he
is a Nobleman. *EUPH.* But a Nobleman
who writes is one thing, and a noble
Writer another. *ALC.* Both Characters
are coincident, as you may see.

DIAL.

V.

XXII. Upon which *Alciphron* pulled a Treatise out of his Pocket, entitled a Soliloquy or Advice to an Author. Wou'd you behold, said he, looking round upon the Company, a noble Specimen of fine Writing; do but dip into this Book: which *Crito* opening read verbatim as follows*.

‘Where then are the Pleasures which Ambition
 And Love affords? How's the gay World enjoy'd?
 Or are those to be esteem'd no Pleasures
 Which are lost by Dulness and Inaction?
 But Indolence is the highest Pleasure.
 To live and not to feel! To feel no Trouble.
 What Good then? Life it self. And is
 This properly to live? is sleeping Life?
 Is this what I shou'd study to prolong?
 Here the
 Fantastic Tribe it self seems scandaliz'd.
 A Civil War begins: The major Part
 Of the capricious Dames do range themselves
 On Reason's Side,
 And declare against the languid Siren.
 Ambition blushes at the offer'd Sweet.
 Conceit and Vanity take superior Airs.
 Ev'n Luxury her self in her polite
 And elegant Humour reproves th' Apostate
 Sister.

Part. 3. Sect. 2.

* And

‘ And marks her as an Alien to true Pleasure. DIAL.
‘ Away thou V.
‘ Drowsy Phantome ! Haunt me no more for I —
‘ Have learned from better than thy Sisterhood
‘ That Life and Happiness consist in Action
‘ And Employment.
‘ But here a busy Form solicits us,
‘ Active, Industrious, Watchful and despising
‘ Pains and Labour. She wears the serious
‘ Countenance of Virtue, but with Features
‘ Of Anxiety and Disquiet.
‘ What is’t she mutters ? What looks she on with
‘ Such Admiration and Astonishment ?
‘ Bags ! Goffers ! Heaps of shining Metal ! What ?
‘ For the service of Luxury ? For her ?
‘ These Preparations ? Art thou then her Friend,
‘ Grave Fancy ! Is it for her thou toilest ?
‘ No, but for Provision against Want.
‘ But Luxury apart ! tell me now,
‘ Hast thou not already a Competence ?
‘ ’Tis good to be secure against the Fear
‘ Of starving. Is there then no Death but this ?
‘ No other Passage out of Life ? Are other Doors
‘ Secur’d if this be bar’d ? Say Avarice !
‘ Thou emptiest of Phantomes, is it not vile
‘ Cowardice thou serv’st ? what further have I then
‘ To do with thee (thou doubly vile Dependent)
‘ When once I have dismift thy Patroness,

DIAL. ‘*And despised her threats?*

V. ‘*Thus I contend with Fancy and Opinion.*



Euphranor, having heard thus far, cried out : What ! will you never have done with your Poetry ? another time may serve : But why shou’d we break off our Conference to read a Play ? You are mistaken, it is no Play nor Poetry, replied Alciphron, but a famous modern Critic moralizing in Prose. You must know this great Man hath (to use his own Words) revealed a *Grand Arcanum* to the World, having instructed Mankind in what he calls *Mirrour-writing, Self-discoursing Practice, and Author Practice*, and shew’d “That “ by virtue of an intimate Recess, we “ may discover a certain Duplicity of “ Soul, and divide our *Self* into two Par- “ ties, or (as he varies the Phrase) practi- “ cally form the Dual Number.” In conse- quence whereof, he hath found out that a Man may argue with himself, and not only with himself, but also with No- tions, Sentiments, and Vices, which by a marvellous Prosopopœia he converts in- to so many Ladies, and so converted, he confutes and confounds them in a Divine Strain. Can any thing be finer, bolder, or more sublime? EUPH. It is very won- derful.

derful. I thought indeed you had been reading a Piece of a Tragedy. Is this he who despiseth our Universities, and sets up for reforming the Style and Taste of the Age?

ALC. The very same. This is the admired Critic of our Times. Nothing can stand the Test of his correct Judgment, which is equally severe to Poets and Parsons. "The *British Muses* (faith this great Man) lisp as in their Cradles; and their stammering Tongues, which nothing but Youth and Rashness can excuse, have hitherto spoken in wretched Pun and Quibble. Our Dramatic *Shakespear*, our *Fletcher*, *Johnson*, and our Epique *Milton* preserve this Style. And, according to him, even our later Authors aiming at a false Sublime, entertain our raw Fancy and unpractised Ear, which has not yet had leisure to form it self, and become truly musical."

EUPH. Pray what Effect may the Lessons of this great Man, in whose Eyes our learned Professors are but bearded Boys, and our most celebrated Wits but wretched Punsters, have had upon the Public? Hath he rubbed off the College Rust, cured the rudeness and rawness of our Authors, and reduced them to his own Attic Standard? Do they aspire to his true Sublime, or imitate his chaste unaffected Style? *ALC.*

Doubt-

DIAL.
V.

DIAL. Doubtless the Taste of the Age is much
V. mended: in proof whereof his Writings
— are universally admired. When our Au-
thor published this Treatise, he foresaw
the public Taste wou'd improve apace;
that Arts and Letters wou'd grow to great
perfection; that there wou'd be a happy
Birth of Genius: of all which things he
spoke, as he faith himself, in a prophetic
Style. *CRI.* And yet, notwithstanding
the prophetical Predictions of this Critic,
I do not find any Science that throve a-
mong us of late, so much as the Minute
Philosophy. In this kind, it must be con-
fessed, we have had many notable Produc-
tions. But whether they are such Master-
pieces for good Writing, I leave to be
determined by their Readers.

XXIII. In the mean time, I must beg
to be excused, if I cannot believe your
great Man on his bare word; when he
wou'd have us think, that Ignorance and
ill Taste are owing to the Christian Reli-
gion or the Clergy, it being my sincere
Opinion, that whatever Learning or Know-
ledge we have among us, is derived from
that Order. If those, who are so sagacious
at discovering a Mote in other Eyes, wou'd
but purge their own, I believe they might
easily see this Truth. For what but Reli-
gion

gion cou'd kindle and preserve a Spirit DIAL.
towards Learning, in such a Northern V.

rough People? *Greece* produced Men of ~~such~~

active and subtile Genius. The public
Conventions and Æmulations of their Ci-
ties forwarded that Genius: And their
natural Curiosity was amused and excited
by learned Conversations, in their public
Walks and Gardens and Porticos. Our Ge-
nius leads to Amusements of a grosser
kind: we breathe a grosser and a colder Air :
and that Curiosity which was general in the
Athenians, and the gratifying of which was
their chief Recreation, is among our People
of Fashion treated like Affectation, and as
such banished from polite Assemblies and
places of Resort ; and without doubt wou'd
in a little Time be banished the Country,
if it were not for the great Reservoirs of
Learning, where those Formalists, Pedants,
and bearded Boys, as your profound Cri-
tic calls them, are maintained by the Li-
berality and Piety of our Predecessors. For
it is as evident that Religion was the Cause
of those Seminaries, as it is that they are
the Cause or Source of all the Learning and
Taste which is to be found, even in those
very Men who are the declared Enemies
of our Religion and public Foundations.
Every one, who knows any thing, knows
we are indebted for our Learning to the

Greek

DIAL. *Greek and Latin Tongues.* This those few
V. vere Censors will readily grant. Perhaps
they may not be so ready to grant, what
all Men must see, that we are indebted for
those Tongues to our Religion. What
else cou'd have made foreign and dead
Languages in such request among us?
What cou'd have kept in being and hand-
ed them down to our times, through so
many dark Ages in which the World was
wafted and disfigured by Wars and Vio-
lence? What, but a regard to the Holy
Scriptures, and Theological Writings of
the Fathers and Doctors of the Church?
And in fact, do we not find that the Learn-
ing of those Times was solely in the Hands
of Ecclesiastics, that they alone lighted the
Lamp in succession one from another, and
transmitted it down to After-ages; and that
ancient Books were collected and preserved
in their Colleges and Seminaries, when all
Love and Remembrance of polite Arts
and Studies was extinguished among the
Laity, whose Ambition intirely turned to
Arms?

XXIV. *ALC.* There is, I must needs
say, one sort of Learning undoubtedly of
Christian Original, and peculiar to the Uni-
versities; where our Youth spend seve-
ral Years in acquiring that mysterious jar-
gon

gon of Scholasticism ; than which there DIAL.
cou'd never have been contrived a more V.
effectual Method, to perplex and confound
Humane Understanding. It is true, Gentle-
men are untaught by the World what they
have been taught at the College : but then
their Time is doubly lost. C.R.I. But
what if this scholastic Learning was not of
Christian but of Mahometan Original, be-
ing derived from the *Arabs*? And what
if this Grievance of Gentlemen's spend-
ing several Years in learning and unlearn-
ing this Jargon, be all Grimace and a Spe-
cimen only of the truth and candour of
certain Minute Philosophers, who raise
great Invectives from flight occasions, and
judge too often without inquiring. Surely
it wou'd be no such deplorable loss of
Time, if a young Gentleman spent a few
Months upon that so much despised and
decried Art of Logic, a Surfeit of which
is by no means the prevailing Nusance of
this Age. It is one thing to waste one's
Time in learning and unlearning the bar-
barous Terms, wiredrawn Distinctions, and
prolix Sophistry of the Schoolmen, and
another to attain some exactness in De-
fining and Arguing : Things perhaps not
altogether beneath the Dignity even of a
Minute Philosopher. There was indeed
a Time, when Logic was considered as
its

DIAL. its own Object: And that Art of Reasoning, instead of being transferred to Things turned altogether upon Words and Abstractions; which produced a sort of Leprony in all parts of Knowledge, corrupting and converting them into hollow verbal Disputations in a most impure Dialect. But those Times are passed; and that, which had been cultivated as the principal Learning for some Ages, is now considered in another Light, and by no means makes that Figure in the Universities, or bears that Part in the Studies of young Gentlemen educated there, which is pretended by those admirable Reformers of Religion and Learning, the Minute Philosophers.

XXV. But who were they that encouraged and produced the Restoration of Arts and polite Learning? What Share had the Minute Philosophers in this Affair? *Matthias Corvinus King of Hungary, Alphonsus King of Naples, Cosmus de Medicis, Picus of Mirandula*, and other Princes and great Men, famous for Learning themselves, and for encouraging it in others with a munificent Liberality, were neither Turks nor Gentiles nor Minute Philosophers. Who was it that transplanted and revived the *Greek Language* and

and Authors, and with them all polite DIAL.
Arts and Literature in the West? Was it
not chiefly *Bessarion* a Cardinal, *Marcus Musurus* an Archbishop, *Theodore Gaza* a
private Clergyman? Has there been a
greater and more renowned Patron, and
Restorer of elegant Studies, in every kind,
since the days of *Augustus Cæsar*, than
Leo the tenth Pope of *Rome*? Did any
Writers approach the Purity of the Clas-
sics nearer than the Cardinals *Bembus* and
Sadoletus, or than the Bishops *Jovius* and
Vida? not to mention an endless Num-
ber of ingenious Ecclesiastics, who flou-
rished on the other side of the *Alpes* in
the Golden Age (as the *Italians* call it)
of *Leo* the Tenth, and wrote, both in
their own Language and the *Latin*, after
the best Models of Antiquity. It is true,
this first Recovery of Learning preceded
the Reformation, and lighted the way to
it: But the Religious Controversies, which
ensued, did wonderfully propagate and im-
prove it in all Parts of Christendom. And
surely, the Church of *England* is, at least,
as well calculated for the Encouragement
of Learning, as that of *Rome*. Experience
confirms this Observation; and I believe
the Minute Philosophers will not be so
partial to *Rome* as to deny it. *ALC.* It
is impossible your account of Learning be-

DIAL. yond the *Alpes* shou'd be true. The noble Critic in my hands, having complimented the *French*, to whom he allows some good Authors, asserts of other Foreigners, particularly the *Italians*, " That they may be reckoned no better than the Corrupters of true Learning and Erudition." CR I. With some sorts of Critics, Dogmatical Censures and Conclusions are not always the result of perfect Knowledge or exact Inquiry : And if they harangue upon Taste, truth of Art, a just Piece, grace of Style, Attic Elegance and such Topics, they are to be understood only as those that would fain talk themselves into Reputation for Courage. To hear *Thrasymachus* speak of Resentment, Duels, and point of Honour, one wou'd think him ready to burst with Valour. LYS. Whatever Merit this Writer may have as a Demolisher, I always thought he had very little as a Builder. It is natural for careless Writers to run into Faults they never think of : But for an exact and severe Critic to shoot his Bolt at random, is unpardonable. If he, who professes at every turn an high esteem for polite Writing, shou'd yet despise those who most excel in it ; one would be tempted to suspect his Taste. But if the very Man, who of all Men talks most about

about Art, and Taste, and critical Skill, DIAL.
and wou'd be thought to have most con- V.
sidered those Points; shou'd often deviate
from his own Rules, into the false Sub-
lime or the *mauvaise Plaisanterie*; What
reasonable Man wou'd follow the Taste
and Judgment of such a Guide, or be se-
duced to climb the steep Ascent, or tread
in the rugged Paths of Virtue on his Re-
commendation ?

XXVI. *ALC.* But to return, methinks
Crito makes no Compliment to the Ge-
nius of his Country, in supposing that
Englishmen might not have wrought out
of themselves, all Art and Science and
good Taste, without being beholden to
Church, or Universities, or ancient Lan-
guages. *CR I.* What might have been is
only Conjecture. What has been, it is not
difficult to know. That there is a Vein in
Britain, of as rich an Ore as ever was in
any Country, I will not deny; but it lies
deep, and will cost Pains to come at: And
extraordinary Pains require an extraordi-
nary Motive. As for what lies next the
Surface, it seems but indifferent, being
neither so good nor in such plenty as in
some other Countries. It was the Com-
parison of an ingenious *Florentine*, that
the celebrated Poems of *Tasso* and *Ariosto*

DIAL. are like two Gardens, the one of Cucumbers, the other of Melons. In the one ~~you~~ you shall find few bad, but the best are not a very good Fruit, in the other much the greater part are good for nothing, but those that are good are excellent. Perhaps the same Comparison may hold, between the *English* and some of their Neighbours. *ALC.* But suppose we should grant that the Christian Religion and its Seminaries might have been of use, in preserving or retrieving polite Arts and Letters; what then? Will you make this an Argument of its Truth? *CRI.* I will make it an Argument of Prejudice and Ingratitude in those Minute Philosophers, who object Darkness, Ignorance, and Rudeness, as an Effect of that very thing, which above all others hath enlightened and civilized and embellished their Country: which is as truly indebted to it for Arts and Sciences (which nothing but Religion was ever known to have planted in such a Latitude) as for that general Sense of Virtue and Humanity, and the Belief of a Providence and future State, which all the Argumentation of Minute Philosophers hath not yet been able to abolish.

XXVII. *ALC.* It is strange you shou'd still persist to argue, as if all the Gentlemen of our Sect were Enemies to Virtue, and

and downright Atheists : Though I have DIAL. assured you of the contrary, and that we V. have among us several, who profess themselves in the Interests of Virtue and Natural Religion, and have also declared, that I my self do now argue upon that Foot. *CR I.* How can you pretend, to be in the Interest of Natural Religion, and yet be professed Enemies of the Christian, the only established Religion which includes whatever is excellent in the Natural, and which is the only means of making those Precepts, Duties, and Notions, so called, become reverenced throughout the World ? Would not he be thought weak or insincere, who shou'd go about to persuade People, that he was much in the Interests of an earthly Monarch ; that he loved and admired his Government ; when at the same time he shewed himself on all occasions, a most bitter Enemy of those very Persons and Methods, which above all others contributed most to his Service, and to make his Dignity known and revered, his Laws observed, or his Dominion extended ? And is not this what Minute Philosophers do, while they set up for Advocates of God and Religion, and yet do all they can to discredit Christians and their Worship ? It must be owned, indeed, that you argue against Christiani-

DIAL. ty, as the Cause of Evil and Wickedness in the World; but with such Arguments, and in such a manner, as might equally prove the same thing of civil Government, of Meat and Drink, of every Faculty and Profession, of Learning, of Eloquence, and even of Humane Reason it self. After all, even those of your Sect who allow themselves to be called Deists, if their Notions are thoroughly examined, will I fear be found to include little of Religion in them. As for the Providence of God watching over the Conduct of Humane Agents and dispensing Blessings or Chastisements, the Immortality of the Soul, a final Judgment, and future State of Rewards and Punishments; how few, if any, of your Free-thinkers have made it their Endeavour to possess Mens Minds with a serious sense of those great points of Natural Religion! How many, on the contrary, endeavour to render the Belief of them doubtful or ridiculous! LYS. To speak the Truth, I, for my part, had never any liking to Religion of any kind, either revealed or unrevealed: And I dare venture to say the same for those Gentlemen of our Sect that I am acquainted with, having never observed them guilty of so much meanness, as even to mention tha Name of God with Reverence, or speak

speak with the least regard of Piety DIAL.
or any sort of Worship. There may per-
haps be found one or two formal pre-
tenders to Enthusiasm and Devotion, in
the way of Natural Religion, who laughed
at Christians for publishing Hymns and
Meditations, while they plagued the
World with as bad of their own : But the
sprightly Men make a jest of all this. It
seems to us meer Pedantry. Sometimes,
indeed, in good Company one may hear
a Word dropt in Commendation of Ho-
nour and Good-nature : but the former of
these, by *Connoisseurs*, is always understood
to mean nothing but Fashion, as the lat-
ter is nothing but Temper and Constitu-
tion, which guides a Man just as Appetite
doth a Brute.

XXVIII. And after all these Argu-
ments and Notions, which beget one ano-
ther without end ; to take the matter short,
neither I nor my Friends for our Souls
cou'd ever comprehend, why Man
might not do very well, and govern him-
self without any Religion at all, as well as
a Brute which is thought the sillier Crea-
ture of the two. Have Brutes Instincts,
Senses, Appetites, and Passions, to steer
and conduct them ? So have Men, and
Reason over and above to consult upon

DIAL. occasion. From these Premises we con-
V. clude, the Road of Humane Life is suf-
ficiently lighted without Religion. *CRI.* Brutes having but small power, limited to
things present or particular, are sufficiently
opposed and kept in order, by the Force
or Faculties of other Animals and the
Skill of Man, without Conscience or Re-
ligion : But Conscience is a necessary
balance to Humane Reason, a Faculty of
such mighty Extent and Power, especially
toward Mischief. Besides, other Animals
are, by the Law of their Nature, deter-
mined to one certain end or kind of Be-
ing, without Inclination or Means either
to deviate or go beyond it. But Man
hath in him a Will and higher Principle;
by virtue whereof he may pursue diffe-
rent or even contrary ends; and either
fall short of or exceed the Perfection
natural to his Species in this World, as
he is capable either, by giving up the
Reins to his sensual Appetites, of degrading
himself into the condition of Brutes, or
else, by well ordering and improving his
Mind, of being transformed into the simi-
litude of Angels. Man alone of all Ani-
mals hath understanding to know his God.
What availeth this Knowledge unless it be
to ennable Man, and raise him to an Imitati-
on and Participation of the Divinity ? Or
what

what cou'd such Ennoblement avail if to end DIAL.
with this Life? Or how can these things take V.
effect without Religion? But the points
of Vice and Virtue, Man and Beast, Sense
and Intellect, have been already at large
canvassed. What! *Lysicles*, wou'd you
have us go back where we were three or
four days ago? *LYS.* By no means: I
had much rather go forward, and make
an end as soon as possible. But to save
trouble, give me leave to tell you once
for all, that, say what you can, you
shall never persuade me so many inge-
nious agreeable Men are in the wrong, and
a pack of snarling sour Bigots in the right.

XXIX. O *Lysicles*, I neither look for Religion among Bigots, nor Reason among Libertines; each kind disgrace their several Pretensions; the one owning no regard even to the plainest and most important Truths, while the others exert an angry Zeal for points of least concern. And surely whatever there is of silly, narrow, and uncharitable in the Bigot, the same is in great measure to be imputed to the conceited Ignorance, and petulant Profaneness of the Libertine. And it is not at all unlikely that as Libertines make Bigots, so Bigots shou'd make Libertines, the Extreme of one party being ever

DIAL. ever observed to produce a contrary Extremes of another. And although, while these Adversaries draw the Rope of Contention, Reason and Religion are often called upon, yet are they perhaps very little considered or concerned in the Contest. *Lysicles*, instead of answering *Crito*, turned short upon *Alciphron*. It was always my Opinion, said he, that nothing cou'd be sillier than to think of destroying Christianity, by crying up Natural Religion. Whoever thinks highly of the one can never, with any consistency, think meanly of the other; it being very evident, that Natural Religion, without Revealed, never was and never can be established or received any where, but in the brains of a few idle speculative Men. I was aware what your Concessions wou'd come to. The Belief of God, Virtue, a Future State, and such fine Notions are, as every one may see with half an eye, the very Basis and corner Stone of the Christian Religion. Lay but this Foundation for them to build on, and you shall soon see what Superstructures our Men of Divinity will raise from it. The Truth and Importance of those points once admitted, a Man need be no Conjurer to prove, upon that Principle, the Excellency and Usefulness of the Christian

Christian Religion : And then to be sure, DIAL,
there must be Priests to teach and propa- V.
gate this useful Religion. And if Priests,
a regular Subordination without doubt in
this worthy Society, and a Provision for
their Maintenance, such as may enable
them to perform all their Rites and Ce-
remonies with Decency, and keep their
sacred Character above Contempt. And
the plain consequence of all this is a Con-
federacy between the Prince and the
Priesthood to subdue the People : So we
have let in at once upon us, a long train
of Ecclesiastical Evils, Priestcraft, Hie-
rarchy, Inquisition. We have lost our
Liberty and Property, and put the Na-
tion to vast Expence, only to purchase
Bridles and Saddles for their own
backs.

XXX. This being spoke with some Sharpness of Tone, and an upbraiding Air, touched *Alciphron* to the quick, who replied nothing, but shew'd Confusion in his Looks. *Crito* smiling look'd at *Euphranor* and me, then, casting an eye on the two Philosophers, spoke as follows : If I may be admitted to interpose good Offices, for preventing a Rupture between old Friends and Brethren in Opinion, I wou'd observe, that in this Charge of *Lysicles* there is something

DIAL. something right and something wrong. It
V. seems right to assert as he doth, that the
real Belief of Natural Religion will lead a
Man to approve of Revealed: But it is
as wrong to assert, that Inquisitions, Ty-
ranny, and Ruin must follow from thence.
Your Free-Thinkers, without Offence be
it said, seem to mistake their Talent.
They imagine strongly, but reason weakly;
mighty at Exaggeration, and jejune in Ar-
gument! Can no Method be found, to re-
lieve them from the Terror of that fierce
and bloody Animal an *English* Parson? Will
it not suffice to pair his Talons without
chopping off his Fingers? Then they are
such wonderful Patriots for Liberty and
Property! When I hear these two Words
in the mouth of a Minute Philosopher, I
am put in mind of the *Teste di Ferro* at
Rome. His Holiness, it seems, not hav-
ing Power to assign Pensions on *Spanish*
Benefices to any but Natives of *Spain*, al-
ways keeps at *Rome* two *Spaniards*, called
Teste di Ferro, who have the Name of all
such Pensions but not the Profit, which
goes to *Italians*. As we may see every
day, both Things and Notions placed to
the account of Liberty and Property,
which in reality neither have nor are meant
to have any share in them. What! Is it
impossible for a Man to be a Christian,
but

but he must be a Slave; or a Clergyman, DIAL.
but he must have the Principles of an In- V.
quisitor? I am far from screening and ju- ~~—~~
stifying Appetite of Domination or Ty-
rannical Power in Ecclesiastics. Some,
who have been guilty in that respect, have
forely paid for it, and it is to be hoped
they always will. But having laid the
Fury and Folly of the ambitious Prelate,
is it not time to look about and spy whe-
ther, on the other hand, some Evil may
not possibly accrue to the State, from the
overflowing Zeal of an Independent Whig?
This I may affirm, without being at any
pains to prove it, that the worst Tyranny
this Nation ever felt was from the Hands
of Patriots of that Stamp.

XXXI. *Lys.* I don't know. Tyranny is
a harsh Word, and sometimes misapplied.
When spirited Men of independent Maxims
create a Ferment or make a Change in the
State: He that loseth is apt to consider
things in one light, and he that wins in
another. In the mean time this is certain-
ly good Policy, that we shou'd be frugal
of our Money, and reserve it for better
Uses, than to expend on the Church and
Religion. *Cri.* Surely the old Apologue
of the Belly and Members need not be re-
peated to such knowing Men. It shou'd
seem

DIAL. seem as needless to observe, that all other
V. States, which ever made any Figure in the
World for Wisdom and Politeness, have
thought Learning deserved Encouragement
as well as the Sword; that Grants for re-
ligious Uses were as fitting as for Knights
Service; and Foundations for propagating
Piety, as necessary to the publick Wel-
fare and Defence, as either Civil or Mili-
tary Establishments. But I ask who are
at this Expence, and what is this Expence
so much complained of? LYS. As if you
had never heard of Church Lands and
Tithes. CRI. But I wou'd fain know,
how they can be charged as an Expence,
either upon the Nation or private Men.
Where nothing is exported the Nation lo-
feth nothing: and it is all one to the Pub-
lick, whether Money circulates at Home
through the Hands of a Vicar or a
Squire. Then as for private Men, who,
for want of Thought, are full of Com-
plaint about the payment of Tithes; can
any Man justly complain of it as a Tax,
that he pays what never belonged to him?
The Tenant rents his Farm with this
Condition, and pays his Landlord propor-
tionably less, than if his Farm had been
exempt from it: So he loseth nothing;
it being all one to him, whether he pays
his Pastor or his Landlord. The Landlord
cannot

cannot complain that he has not what he DIAL.
hath no Right to, either by Grant, Purchase, or Inheritance. This is the Case
of Tithes ; and as for the Church Lands,
He surely can be no Free-thinker, nor any
Thinker at all, who doth not see that no
Man whether Noble, Gentle, or Plebeian,
hath any sort of Right or Claim to them,
which he may not with equal Justice pre-
tend to all the Lands in the Kingdom.
LYS. At present indeed we have no Right,
and that is our Complaint. *CRI.* You
wou'd have then what you have no Right
to. *LYS.* Not so neither : what we
wou'd have is first a Right convey'd by
Law, and in the next place, the Lands by
virtue of such Right. *CRI.* In order to this,
it might be expedient in the first place, to get
an Act passed for excommunicating from all
Civil Rights every Man, that is a Chris-
tian, a Scholar, and wears a black Coat,
as guilty of three capital Offences against
the public Weal of this Realm. *LYS.*

To deal frankly, I think it wou'd be an
excellent good Act. It wou'd provide at
once for several deserving Men, rare Arti-
ficers in Wit and Argument and Ridicule,
who have, too many of them, but small
Fortunes with a great Arrear of Merit
towards their Country, which they have
so long enlightened and adorned *gratis.*

DIAL. *EUPH.* Pray tell me, *Lysicles*, are not
V. the Clergy legally possessed of their Lands
— and Emoluments? *LYS.* No Body denies
it. *EUPH.* Have they not been pos-
sessed of them from Time immemorial?
LYS. This too I grant. *EUPH.* They
claim then by Law and ancient Prescrip-
tion. *LYS.* They do. *EUPH.* Have
the oldest Families of the Nobility a better
Title? *LYS.* I believe not. It grieves
me to see so many overgrown Estates in
the hands of ancient Families, on account
of no other Merit, but what they brought
with them into the World. *EUPH.* May
you not then as well take their Lands too,
and bestow them on the Minute Philo-
phers, as Persons of more Merit? *LYS.* So
much the better. This enlarges our View,
and opens a new Scene: It is very delight-
ful in the Contemplation of Truth, to
behold how one Theory grows out of ano-
ther. *ALC.* Old *Pætus* used to say, that
if the Clergy were deprived of their Hire,
we shou'd lose the most popular Argu-
ment against them. *LYS.* But so long
as Men live by Religion, there will never
be wanting Teachers and Writers in De-
fence of it. *CRI.* And how can you be
sure they wou'd be wanting, though they
did not live by it; since it is well known
Christianity had its Defenders even when
Men

Men died by it? One thing I know: there DIAL.
is a rare Nursery of young Plants grow- V.
ing up, who have been carefully guarded
against every Air of Prejudice, and sprinkled
with the Dew of our choicest Principles;
mean while, Wishes are wearisome,
and to our infinite Regret nothing can be
done, so long as there remains any Pre-
judice in favour of old Customs and Laws
and national Constitutions, which, at bot-
tom, we very well know and can de-
monstrate to be only Words and Notions.

XXXII. But, I can never hope, *Crito*,
to make you think my Schemes rea-
sonable. We reason each right upon
his own Principles, and shall never agree
till we quit our Principles, which cannot
be done by reasoning. We all talk of Just
and Right and Wrong, and Public Good,
and all those things. The Names may be
the same, but the Notions and Conclu-
sions very different, perhaps diametrically
opposite; and yet each may admit of clear
Proofs, and be inferred by the same way
of reasoning. For instance, the Gentlemen
of the Club which I frequent, define Man
to be a sociable Animal: Consequently,
we exclude from this Definition all those
Humane Creatures, of whom it may be

Z.

said,

DIAL. said, we had rather have their Room than
V. their Company. And such, though wear-
ing the Shape of Man, are to be esteem'd
in all account of Reason, not as Men, but
only as Humane Creatures. Hence it
plainly follows, that Men of Pleasure, Men
of Humour, and Men of Wit, are alone
properly and truly to be considered as
Men. Whatever therefore conduceth to
the Emolument of such, is for the good of
Mankind, and consequently very just and
lawful, although seeming to be attended
with Loss or Damage to other Creatures:
inasmuch as no real injury can be done in
life or property to those, who know not
how to enjoy them. This we hold for
clear and well connected Reasoning. But
others may view things in another light,
assign different Definitions, draw other In-
ferences, and perhaps consider, what we
suppose the very Top and Flower of the
Creation, only as a wart or excrescence of
Humane Nature. From all which there
must ensue a very different System of Mo-
rals, Politics, Rights, and Notions. CRI.
If you have a mind to argue, we will
argue, if you have more mind to jest, we
will laugh with you. LYS.

— *Ridentem dicere verum
Quid vetat?*

This

This Partition of our kind into Men and DIAL.
Humane Creatures, puts me in mind of another Notion, broached by one of our Club, whom we used to call the *Pythagorean*. V.

XXXIII. He made a threefold Partition of the Humane Species, into Birds, Beasts, and Fishes, being of Opinion that the Road of Life lies upwards, in a perpetual Ascent through the Scale of Being : In such sort, that the Souls of Insects after death make their second Appearance, in the Shape of perfect Animals, Birds, Beasts, or Fishes ; which upon their death are preferred into Humane Bodies, and in the next Stage into Beings of a higher and more perfect kind. This Man we considered at first as a sort of Heretic, because his Scheme seemed not to consist with our fundamental Tenet, the Mortality of the Soul : But he justified the Notion to be innocent, inasmuch as it included nothing of Reward or Punishment, and was not proved by any Argument, which supposed or implied either incorporeal Spirit, or Providence, being only inferred, by way of Analogy, from what he had observed in Humane Affairs, the Court, the Church, and the Army ; wherein the Tendency is always upwards from lower Posts to higher. According to this System,

DIAL. tem, the Fishes are those Men who swim
V. in pleasure, such as *petits maitres, bons*
vivans, and honest Fellows. The Beasts
are dry, drudging, covetous, rapacious
Folk, and all those addicted to care and
business like Oxen, and other dry land A-
nimals, which spend their lives in labour
and fatigue. The Birds are airy notional
Men, Enthusiasts, Projectors, Philosophers,
and such like: in each Species every In-
dividual retaining a Tincture of his for-
mer State, which constitutes what is cal-
led Genius. If you ask me which Spe-
cies of Humane Creatures I like best, I an-
swer, The flying Fish; that is, a Man of
animal Enjoyment with a mixture of
Whim. Thus you see we have our Creeds
and our Systems, as well as graver Folks;
with this Difference, that they are not
strait-laced but fit easy, to be slipped off
or on, as humour or occasion serves. And
now I can, with the greatest æquanimity
imaginable, hear my Opinions argued a-
gainst, or confuted.

XXXIV. *ALC.* It were to be wished,
all Men were of that mind. But you
shall find a sort of Men, whom I need
not name, that cannot bear with the least
temper, to have their Opinions examined
or

or their Faults censured. They are against DIAL Reason, because Reason is against them. V. For our parts we are all for Liberty of Conscience. If our Tenets are absurd, we allow them to be freely argued and inspected; and by parity of Reason we might hope to be allowed the same Privilege, with respect to the Opinions of other Men. C.R.I. O *Alciphron*, Wares that will not bear the light are justly to be suspected. Whatever therefore moves you to make this Complaint, take my word I never will: But as hitherto I have allowed your Reason its full scope, so for the future I always shall. And though I cannot approve of railing or declaiming, not even in my self, whenever you have shewed me the way to it: Yet this I will answer for, that you shall ever be allowed to reason as closely and as strenuously as you can. But for the love of Truth, be candid, and do not spend your Strength and our Time, in points of no significance, or foreign to the purpose, or agreed between us. We allow that Tyranny and Slavery are bad things: but why shou'd we apprehend them from the Clergy at this time? Rites and Ceremonies we own are not Points of chief moment in Religion: but why shou'd we ridicule things in their own Nature, at least,

DIAL. Innocent, and which bear the Stamp of
V. supreme Authority? That Men in Divi-
nity, as well as other Subjects, are per-
plexed with useless Disputes, and are like
to be so as long as the World lasts I freely
acknowledge: But why must all the Hu-
mane Weakness and Mistakes of Clergy-
men be imputed to wicked Designs? Why
indiscriminately abuse their Character and
Tenets? Is this like Candour, love of
Truth, and Free-thinking? It is granted
there may be found, now and then, spleen
and ill-breeding in the Clergy: But are
not the same Faults incident to *English*
Laymen, of a retired Education and
Country Life? I grant there is infinite
Futility in the Schoolmen: but I deny
that a Volume of that doth so much
Mischief, as a Page of Minute Philo-
sophy. That weak or wicked Men shou'd,
by favour of the World, creep into
Power and high Stations in the Church, is
nothing wonderful: and that in such
Stations they shou'd behave like themselves,
is natural to suppose. But all the while
it is evident, that not the Gospel but the
World, not the Spirit but the Flesh, not
God but the Devil, puts them upon their
unworthy Atchievements. We make no
difficulty to grant, that nothing is more
infamous

infamous than Vice and Ignorance in a DIAL.
Clergyman; nothing more base than a V.
Hypocrite, more frivolous than a Pedant,
more cruel than an Inquisitor. But it
must be also granted by you, Gentlemen,
that nothing is more ridiculous and ab-
surd, than for pedantic, ignorant, and
corrupt Men to cast the first Stone, at
every shadow of their own Defects and
Vices in other Men.

XXXV. *ALC.* When I consider the
detestable State of Slavery and Su-
perstition, I feel my Heart dilate and
expand it self to grasp that inestimable
blessing of Liberty, absolute Liberty in
its utmost unlimited Extent. This is the
sacred and high Prerogative, the very life
and health of our *English* Constitution. You
must not therefore think it strange, if with
a vigilant and curious Eye, we guard it
against the minutest Appearance of Evil.
You must even suffer us to cut round a-
bout, and very deep, and make use of the
magnifying Glass, the better to view and
extirpate every the least speck, which
shall discover it self in what we are care-
ful and jealous to preserve, as the Apple
of our Eye. *CR I.* As for unbounded
Liberty I leave it to Savages, among

Z 4 whom

DIAL. whom alone I believe it is to be found:

V. But, for the reasonable legal Liberty of our Constitution, I most heartily and sincerely wish it may for ever subsist and flourish among us. You and all other Englishmen cannot be too vigilant, or too earnest, to preserve this goodly frame, or to curb and disappoint the wicked Ambition of whoever, Layman or Ecclesiastic, shall attempt to change our free and gentle Government into a slavish or severe one. But what Pretext can this afford for your Attempts against Religion, or indeed how can it be consistent with them? Is not the Protestant Religion a main part of our Legal Constitution? I remember to have heard a Foreigner remark, that we of this Island were very good Protestants, but no Christians. But whatever Minute Philosophers may wish, or Foreigners say, it is certain our Laws speak a different Language. ALC. This puts me in mind of the wise reasoning of a certain sage Magistrate, who, being pressed by the Raillery and Arguments of an ingenious Man, had nothing to say for his Religion but that, ten Millions of People inhabiting the same Island might, whether right or wrong, if they thought good, establish Laws for the worshipping of

of God in their Temples, and appealing to him in their Courts of Justice. And that in case ten thousand ingenious Men shou'd publickly deride and trample on those Laws, it might be just and lawful for the said ten Millions, to expel the said ten thousand ingenious Men out of their said Island. *EUPH.* And pray, what answer wou'd you make to this remark of the sage Magistrate? *ALC.* The answer is plain. By the Law of Nature, which is superior to all positive Institutions, Wit and Knowledge have a right to command Folly and Ignorance. I say, ingenious Men have by natural Right a Dominion over Fools. *EUPH.* What Dominion over the Laws and People of *Great Britain*, Minute Philosophers may be entitled to by Nature, I shall not dispute, but leave to be considered by the Public. *ALC.* This Doctrine, it must be owned, was never thoroughly understood before our own times. In the last age *Hobbes* and his Followers, though otherwise very great Men, declared for the Religion of the Magistrate, probably because they were afraid of the Magistrate; but times are changed, and the Magistrate may now be afraid of us. *CRI.* I allow the Magistrate may well be afraid of you in one sense,

DIAL. sense, I mean, afraid to trust you. This
V. brings to my Thoughts a Passage
~~—~~ on the trial of *Leander* for a capital
Offence: That Gentleman having picked
out and excluded from his Jury, by
peremptory exception, all but some Men
of Fashion and Pleasure, humbly moved
when *Dorcon* was going to kiss the Book,
that he might be required to declare upon
Honour, whether he believed either God
or Gospel. *Dorcon*, rather than hazard his
Reputation as a Man of Honour and
Free-thinker, openly avow'd that he be-
lieved in neither. Upon which the
Court declared him unfit to serve on a
Jury. By the same reason, so many were
set aside, as made it necessary to put off
the Trial. We are very easy, replied *Al-
cipbron*, about being trusted to serve on
Juries, if we can be admitted to serve in
lucrative Employments. C.R.I. But what
if the Government shou'd injoin, that
every one, before he was sworn into
Office, shou'd make the same Declaration
which *Dorcon* was required to make?
ALC. God forbid! I hope there is no
such Design on foot. C.R.I. Whatever
Designs may be on foot, thus much is
certain: The Christian Reformed Religion
is a principal Part and Corner-stone of
our

our free Constitution ; and I verily think, DIAL.
the only thing that makes us deserving V.
of Freedom, or capable of enjoying it. —
Freedom is either a Blessing or a Curse as
Men use it. And to me it seems, that if
our Religion were once destroy'd from
among us, and those Notions, which pass
for Prejudices of a Christian Education,
erased from the minds of *Britons*, the
best thing that cou'd befall us wou'd be
the loss of our Freedom. Surely a People
wherein there is such restless Ambition,
such high Spirits, such Animosity of
Faction, so great Interests in Contest,
such unbounded Licence of Speech and
Press, amidst so much Wealth and Luxu-
ry, nothing but those *veteres aviæ*, which
you pretend to extirpate, cou'd have hi-
therto kept from ruin.

XXXVI. Under the Christian Religion
this Nation hath been greatly improved.
From a sort of Savages, we have grown
civil, polite, and learned : We have made
a decent and noble Figure both at home and
abroad. And, as our Religion decreaseth,
I am afraid we shall be found to have
declined. Why then shou'd we persist in
the dangerous Experiment ? ALC. One
wou'd think, Crito, you had forgot the
many

DIAL. many Calamities occasioned by Church-
V. men and Religion. C.R.I. And one
— wou'd think, you had forgot what was
answered this very day to that Objection.
But, not to repeat eternally the same
things, I shall observe in the first place,
That if we reflect on the past State of
Christendom, and of our own Country in
particular, with our Feuds and Factions sub-
sist^{ing} while we were all of the same Re-
ligion, for instance, that of the White and
Red Roses, so violent and bloody and of
such long continuance; we can have no
assurance that those ill humours, which
have since shewn themselves under the
masque of Religion, wou'd not have
broke out with some other Pretext, if this
had been wanting. I observe in the se-
cond place, that it will not follow from
any Observations you can make on our
History, that the Evils, accidentally oc-
caisioned by Religion, bear any proportion
either to the good Effects it hath really
produced, or the Evils it hath prevented.
Lastly, I observe, that the best things
may by accident be the occasion of Evil;
which accidental Effect is not, to speak
properly and truly, produced by the good
thing it self, but by some evil thing, which,
being neither Part, Property, nor Effect

of it, happens to be joined with it. But DIAL.
I shou'd be ashamed to infist and enlarge
on so plain a Point, and shall only add
that, whatever Evils this Nation might
have formerly sustained from Superstition,
no Man of common sense will say, the Evils
felt or apprehended at present are from
that Quarter. Priestcraft is not the reign-
ing Distemper at this Day. And surely it
will be owned, that a wise Man, who
takes upon him to be vigilant for the pub-
lic Weal, shou'd touch proper things at
proper times, and not prescribe for a
Surfeit when the Distemper is a Con-
sumption. ALC. I think we have suffi-
ciently discussed the Subject of this day's
Conference. And now, let *Lysicles* take
it as he will, I must in regard to my own
Character, as a fair impartial Adversary,
acknowledge there is something in what
Crito hath said upon the Usefulness of the
Christian Religion. I will even own to
you that some of our Sect are for allowing
it a Toleration. I remember, at a meet-
ing of several ingenious Men, after much
debate we came successively to divers Re-
solutions. The first was, that no Reli-
gion ought to be tolerated in the State:
But this on more mature thought was
judged impracticable. The second was
that

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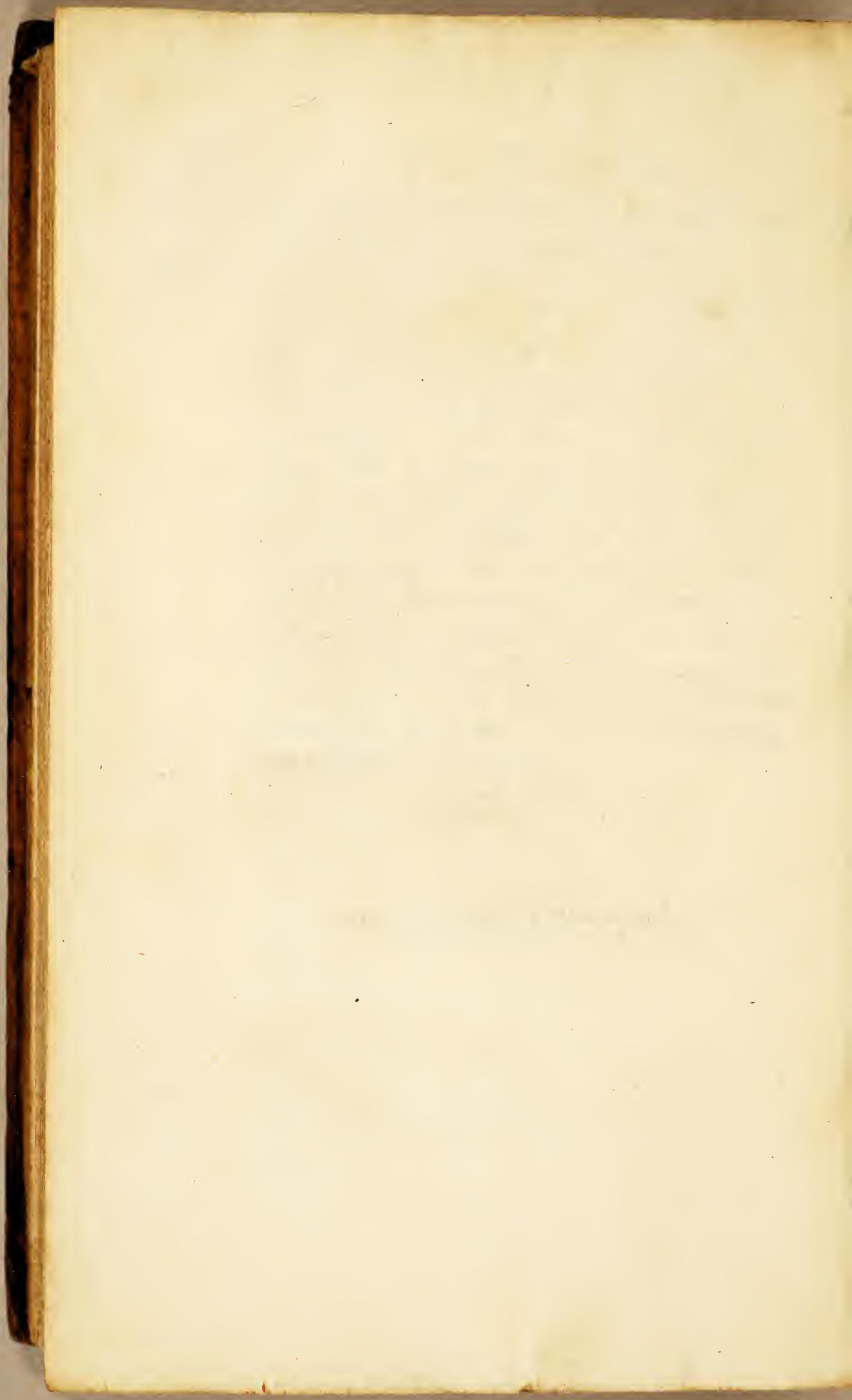
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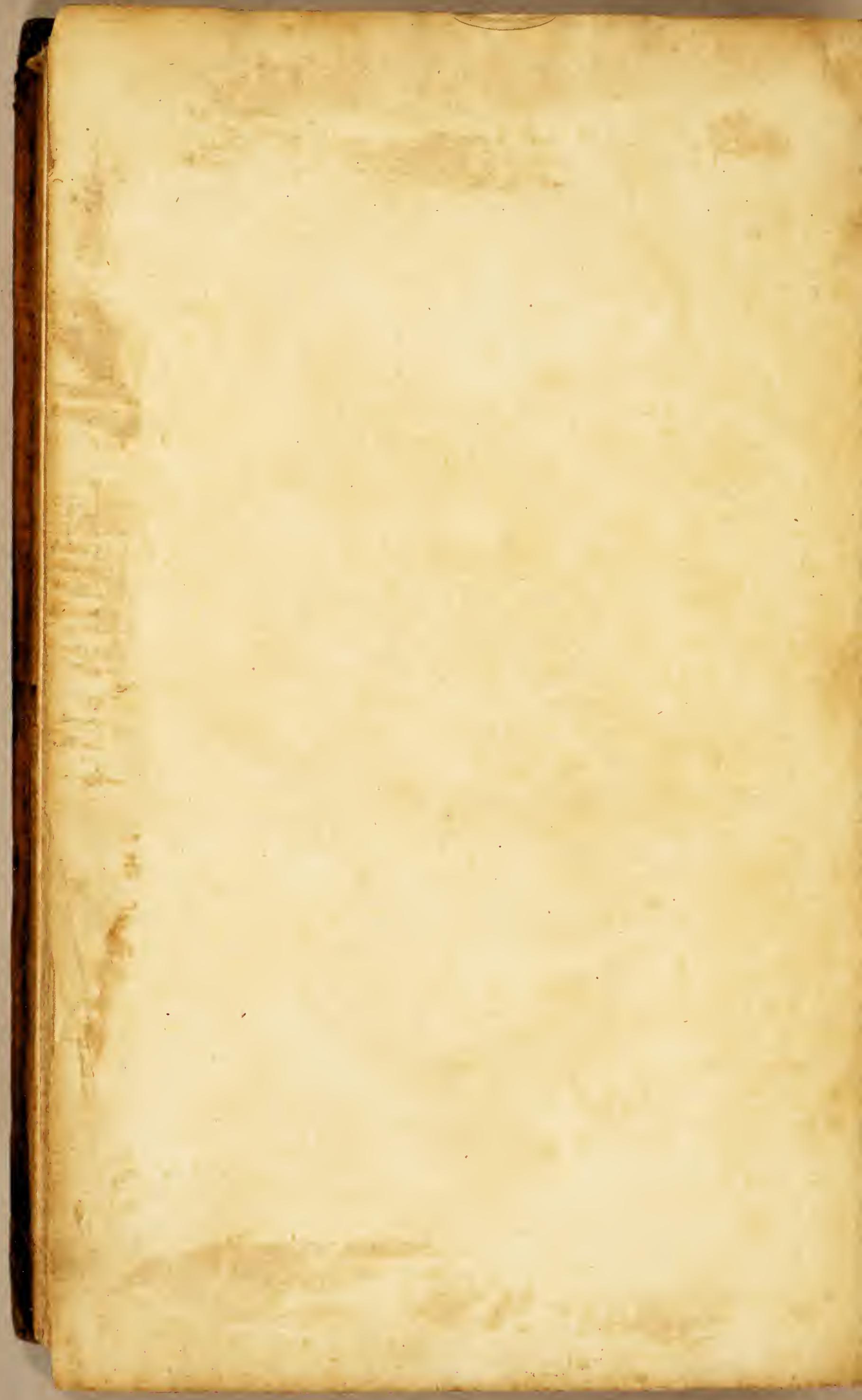
DIAL. that all Religions shou'd be tolerated, but
V. none countenanced except Atheism : But
~~—~~ it was apprehended, that this might breed
Contentions among the lower sort of Peo-
ple. We came therefore to conclude in
the third place, that some Religion or
other shou'd be established for the use of
the Vulgar. And after a long Dispute
what this Religion shou'd be, *Lysis* a
brisk young Man, perceiving no signs of
Agreement, proposed that the present
Religion might be tolerated, till a better
was found. But allowing it to be expedient,
I can never think it true, so long as
there lie unanswerable Objections against
it, which, if you please, I shall take the
Liberty to propose at our next meeting.
To which we all agreed.

The End of the First Volume.

red beams of a golden morning of heralds and
gold, and like a sun-burnt banner over them. "A
beam of gold and red, I made it to be seen in
such bright robes and splendours, as though
the whole world were all gold, and all
the sun of the world should be all ador-
ed; and he who sees it, shall find
it good, and himself comforted under other
desires. For the sun, by which we are directed
and comforted, and taught to labour,
is the sun of the world, and he who
finds him, and follows him, will find
himself comforted, and his labours com-
forted, and his labours rewarded, and his
labours multiplied."

And when he had said this,





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